

Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXII, Issue No. 49

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2012

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## OPINION METER

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A World War II veteran said nobody helped him after a daylight carjacking.

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## US Labor probes salary delays at CHC



By MONETH G. DEPOSA  
[moneth\\_deposa@saipantribune.com](mailto:moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com)  
REPORTER

The ongoing financial crisis at the Commonwealth Health Center and its fallout has caught the attention of federal labor authorities, prompting a visit to the hospital and interviews with its employees.

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### HE'S BACK!

Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan), left, is welcomed back by Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), right, during a joint session of the Senate and House of Representatives yesterday. Crisostimo came back on Friday from California where he stayed for four months to receive radiation and chemotherapy for his throat cancer. He said he is seeking re-election under Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's Republican Party.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

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## NMI now more dependent on federal dollars than local funds

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO  
[haidee\\_eugenio@saipantribune.com](mailto:haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com)  
REPORTER

Federal spending and grants pumped into the CNMI now exceed the local government's gross revenue, and Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) said this means the CNMI is now "more dependent on federal dollars."

Both federal and local money are used for a host of programs and services related to health, education, public safety, employment, environmental protection, disability assistance, water, power and wastewater, youth activities and promoting entrepreneurship.

The federal government's direct expenditures or obligations in the CNMI

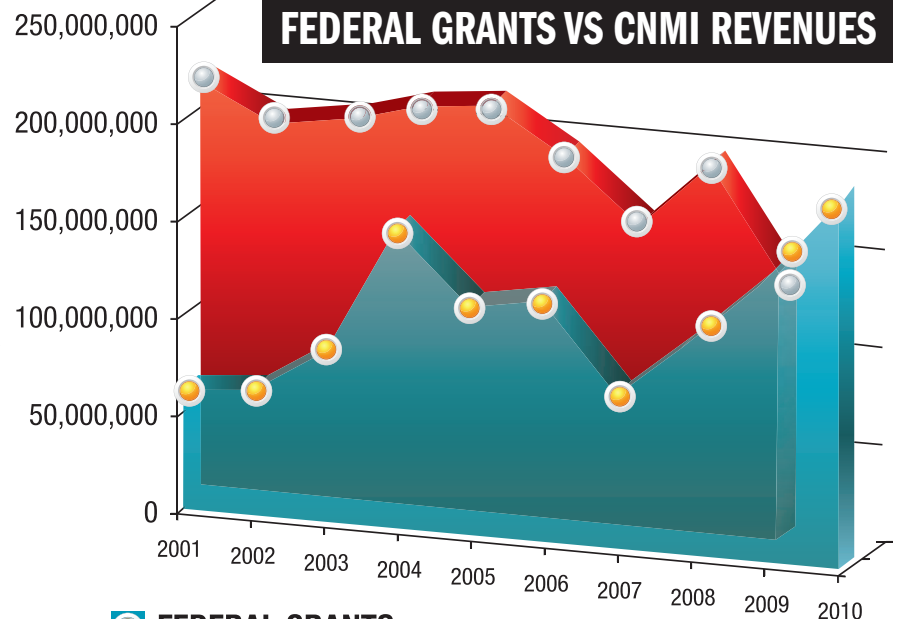
totaled over \$258 million in 2010, while federal grants alone reached almost \$190 million in 2010, exceeding CNMI revenue of over \$130 million.

"It is clear that federal money is crucial to the Commonwealth and that we have to be adept at finding, applying for, and managing these grants. That's why your congressional office is currently hosting a comprehensive grants workshop," Sablan said.

The trend started in 2009 when federal grants totaled over \$147 million, more than the CNMI government's gross revenue of over \$137 million. Some lawmakers said American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding is one main

See NMI on Page 4

### FEDERAL GRANTS VS CNMI REVENUES



FEDERAL GRANTS  
CNMI REVENUES

Source: Office of the Delegate  
Graphic: Ross Garcia © Saipan Tribune 2012



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## Call for papers for first Marianas history conference

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**  
[clarissa\\_david@saipantribune.com](mailto:clarissa_david@saipantribune.com)  
REPORTER

The Guam Preservation Trust and the Northern Mariana Islands Humanities Council are calling for papers for the first ever Marianas History Conference.

The conference, slated for June 14 to 16, with the venue to be announced later, will feature keynote speakers University of Guam president Robert Underwood and Fr. Francis X. Hezel, S.J.

The theme for the conference is "One Archipelago, Many Stories," which highlights the deep and rich history of the Mariana Islands and bridges the political division of the archipelago dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Papers to be submitted for the conference cover a wide range of categories: Ancient History, which includes results of archaeological research; Early Colonial, which covers 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; Late Colonial, from 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; World War II; Recent or post-war; and oral history and genealogical research.

Paper lengths should include full presentations for 20 minutes and shorter communications for five minutes. There will be arrangements for a limited number of featured presentations of up to 30 minutes.

The organizers will also accept posters focusing on the conference theme and/or topics and will be exhibited until the second day of the conference and will be returned on the final day.

Paper and poster abstracts should have a maximum of 150 words and submitted no later than March 15. Complete papers in Word format should be received by June 1 and final posters by June 14.

Diversity is encouraged among participants so the call for papers is also open to high school and college students. Panels will be organized once the number and range of papers is finalized. Interested scholars are invited to volunteer as session chairs.

Additional activities such as film screenings, history book exhibit and sales, local art exhibit and sales, as well as optional tours will be provided to conference participants.

Discounted rates for the participants' hotel accommodations will also be available.

For more information, call Scott Russell at 235-4785.

## Local



A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority  
*Tourism is everybody's business.*

### March 2012 Sporting Events

The **Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA)** continues its work to expand sports tourism opportunities for the islands, as March marks the month that the MVA and its tourism partners host a series of major sporting events aimed at attracting visitors and international media attention.



Drivers and pet owners are reminded to help tourism and support competitors by driving carefully and securing their pets.

Drivers and pet owners are reminded to help tourism and support competitors by driving carefully and securing their pets.

The **7th Annual Saipan Marathon, Half-Marathon, 10K and 50K** take place this Saturday (March 3) beginning at American Memorial Park at 4:30 a.m. with the full marathon and 50K, followed by the half-marathon at 5:45 a.m. and the 10K at 6 a.m. Nearly 800 runners, mostly from Japan, have registered for the event.



Meanwhile, registration is still open for three following events. The **2012 XTERRA Saipan Championship** takes place on March 24, featuring a 1.5km swim, 40K bike race, and 12K trail run. The event, dubbed the Crown Jewel of the **XTERRA Tour**, will highlight the warm waters, pristine jungles and picturesque coastal roadways of the island. For those eyeing a shorter course, the **XTERRA Sunset Trail Run** will be held on March 23, 2012, at 5 p.m.

The last weekend of March will test the will of triathletes in the annual **Tagaman** triathlon, named for the legendary Chamorro chief who was fabled to have ripped a coconut tree from its roots in his youth. The Tagaman will feature a 2km swim, 60km bike, and 15km run.

Registration deadlines are March 21, 2012, for XTERRA Saipan Championship and XTERRA Saipan Trail Run, and March 27, 2012, for Tagaman. Visit the official website at [www.saipansports.com](http://www.saipansports.com) to register.



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# Buck Consultant: Pension plan at only 28 pct. funding level

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The estimated value of the NMI Retirement Fund's portfolio translates to a funding level of just 28 percent, which means

if the pension agency is closed down now it won't have enough cash to pay for its total obligation to members, according to the Fund's actuarial adviser, Buck Consultants, yesterday.

The Fund's portfolio was

valued at \$253.4 million as of Feb. 17 this year. It is spread out in fixed income (\$143.8 million); CDARS and CDARS bonds (\$107.9 million); alternative investments (\$1.4 million); and cash and cash equivalent (\$164,022).

In yesterday's board meeting, Fund chair Sixto K. Igisomar disclosed that the pension agency's accrued unfunded liability is at about or over \$1 billion, representing the amount the government will owe retirees and beneficiaries if the program is terminated today.

Last year, Buck Consultants presented current and projected data that reflect the depleting position of the pension program and the possible ways its lifespan could be extended by some more years. But to do this, Buck Consultants emphasized

the need to enforce a combination of increasing contributions and reducing benefits.

Dylan Porter, Buck Consultants' principal and consulting actuary, did almost the same presentation to the board yesterday. Using graphs and numbers, Porter told *Saipan Tribune* that there are "more similarities than differences" in the two presentations.

In his presentation early last year, Porter presented different scenarios relating to the impact of reducing and restructuring members' benefits. The board took no action after that first presentation.

Porter reiterated to the board yesterday that if members' benefits are not reduced soon and the Fund continues to collect just \$13 million in annual contributions, the \$250 million left in its investment portfolio will

be depleted in two years.

However, if the Fund will implement a 50-percent cut in members' benefits with the same \$13 million annual contribution, the program's lifespan will last until at least 2028, he said.

A 10-percent cut in benefits with the same asset value and contribution will only buy some two months to extend the 2014 lifespan of the program, he said.

Porter said a healthy and viable pension plan has to have \$800 million in its portfolio.

After almost two hours of presentation, Commonwealth Retirees Association chair Lorenzo Leon Guerrero-Cabrera urged the board to focus on "solutions" for the Fund rather than arguing over "data and numbers" that he believes are not realistic at all.

"These figures are nice, but are they realistic?" he asked

the board, adding that the agency is running out of time to prevent the near-collapse of the program.

Cabrera said many retirees are willing to sacrifice as they see this as the only option to save the Fund. However, he said the association opposes a 50-percent cut in benefits.

Igisomar pointed out that Porter's presentation is key to justifying any step the board may take and answers the need to present concrete numbers to back up their position with the Legislature.

Igisomar stressed that the board cannot unilaterally decide to cut benefits because it involves constitutional issues. He tasked the board's committees to review Buck Consultants' recommendations and what options to take.

## Legislature approves two 15-year lease extensions on public lands

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**  
haidee\_eugenio@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Legislature approved yesterday two separate requests for 15-year public land lease extensions after a lengthy discussion mostly on some lawmakers' concern about the lack of a provision requiring property value appraisal for lessee L&T Group of Companies Ltd.-REM International Inc., and breaches of lease agreements both by L&T and V&C Enterprises.

But Public Lands Secretary Oscar M. Babauta, during a joint session of the Senate and House of Representatives, clarified that the breaches have since been addressed and "were not material breaches [that] would merit lease termination."

In the end, the Legislature approved the two lease extensions.

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) and Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), among other lawmakers, asked Babauta why there's no required fair market value assessment for L&T.

Babauta said the original lease did not require such. He said if he were at the helm of DPL's predecessor, Marianas Public Land Corp., he would have made sure it's required.

But Babauta, a former House speaker, said DPL cannot afford to go into court battle for the next five years should L&T file a complaint against DPL for making material changes to the original lease agreement.

"I'd rather spend those money for...homesteads than to pay counsels," he told lawmakers.

Babauta said the L&T rate, even without appraisal, is "fair."

### Voting

Of the 29 members of the Legislature, only two were absent—Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) and Rep. Sylvester Iguel (Cov-Saipan). House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) said the two were "excused."

By a vote of 27-0, the Legislature adopted Joint Session Resolution 17-6 approving V&C Enterprises' request to extend its lease by 15 years.

The Legislature also adopted by a vote of 26-1 Joint Senate Resolution 17-6 granting extension to L&T's lease.

Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan) was the only one who voted "no."

In a later interview, Crisostimo said L&T's extension proposal should have been rejected to force property value appraisal and for the government to be able to demand a higher rate.

DPL's Babauta said if the Leg-

islature decides to reject L&T's proposed lease extension, DPL will be forced to issue a request for proposal for the property.

But he said the chance of having anybody else interested in the same property during these tough times is slim.

### Breaches

Babauta, in separate letters to the Legislature, said V&C and L&T have maintained good relationships with DPL.

He said although both breached the leases, these were resolved in a timely manner and did not entail lease termination.

Among the breaches were late payment of rentals and charges; failure to submit gross receipt reports, certified financial statements and insurance documents; failure to secure DPL's prior written consent for subleases/renewals of subleases, the execution of mortgages, conveyance, construction, construction/demolition/improvements whose value exceed a specified amount in the lease and for activities not indicated in the lease's purpose.

Babauta, in responding to lawmakers' questions about the breaches, reiterated that these breaches have since been corrected.

Babauta also made it clear that it's common among DPL's clients to breach the leases but they would immediately correct those once they were brought to their attention.

### Benefits

DPL touted the economic benefits to the CNMI of approving 15-year lease extensions for L&T and V&C.

L&T, for example, has paid \$152,989.20 since the lease execution in 1986. It currently pays DPL \$8,851.99 annually for the lease in Lower Base.

L&T's original lease was signed on Feb. 13, 1986. The leased area is some 12,225 square meters in Lower Base, where the company conducts the business of grocery warehousing, moving, loading, unloading and storage of property, and related activities.

DPL also said V&C has paid \$199,635 since the lease was executed in 1986. This total includes the percentage of the fees that DPL receives from V&C's subleases. V&C currently pays DPL \$3,370 annually for the lease.

"Should the 15-year extension [of V&C] be approved, the subsequent annual lease rentals will be based on a percentage of the appraised market value of the property, which will be reappraised every five years," DPL's Babauta said.

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# Crime Stoppers getting 'good tips' in Romero killing

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

NMI Crime Stoppers Program coordinator Jason Tarkong said that the program has received "good tips" in connection with the killing of bartender

Emerita "Emie" Romero.

In an interview last week, Tarkong said that Crime Stoppers got "good tips" and that those information were forwarded to the Department of Public Safety's Criminal Investigation Bureau.

In a news briefing on Friday, Tar-

kong underscored the importance of the public's participation in sharing information that will lead to the identification and arrest of Romero's killer.

The cash reward for any information leading to an arrest in this case has now reached \$22,000, including the Crime

Stoppers' \$1,000.

On Friday, Public Safety Commissioner Ramon C. Mafnas disclosed that authorities have identified a "person of interest" in Romero's killing.

Mafnas said that DPS and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are currently in-

vestigating the activities and events associated with this "person of interest."

Romero was last seen alive boarding a green or blue tinted sedan around 3am on Feb. 5 near her residence in Garapan. FBI agents found her body two days later during a search in the northernmost building of the former La Fiesta Mall in San Roque. Romero's body was flown to the Philippines last week.

## 'Cost-saving measure without cutting education'

Energy use is an expense that the Public School System continues to grapple with for years now and with the mounting financial squeeze, it led the school district to make yet again another tough decision: reducing energy consumption.

This latest cost-saving measure has been carefully planned that involved a series of dialogues and meetings with school personnel, staff, and air conditioning providers on Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

The use of air conditioning units on all public school campuses has been reduced only by two hours during instructional time, while leaving them turned on during the warmest time in any given school day. Schools and the Central Office are allowed to use their air-conditioning units for only four to five hours during regular school or workday.

The PSS central office has also cut the number of hours for its air conditioning units.

"It is difficult but it is important for us at PSS to implement cost-saving measures. And we are asking our families and students to bear with us as we work to overcome these difficulties," explained Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan.

PSS has been under increasing pressure to maintain its services without sacrificing the quality of education of school children. With its current funding level pegged at \$30 million—the lowest appropriation in a decade—the school system has been innovative in the use of its earmarks without sacrificing student services.

How to keep cuts out of the classrooms in the midst of shrinking government budget for public education has been compounded with an expensive utility rate.

This year the figure is bleak for PSS: the volatile utility rate will cause the school system to spend more than the

appropriated \$2 million for "operational cost." The amount, tucked into its annual budget, is not solely for utilities; it also is spent for fuel of all school buses and vans and for the operational and administrative expenses of all PSS facilities.

The school system averages at least \$400,000 in monthly utilities expenses and a total of \$4.8 million in one year.

Reducing the number of hours in the use of air conditioning units in school classrooms and offices was the best option, rather cutting classroom/instructional supplies or reducing the services it provides to school children through various programs.

At 44 cents per kilowatt-hour, Sablan said that PSS could no longer afford it.

"We have had several conversations with our school staffs and administrators, service providers and stakeholders and we all agreed that rather than cut or reduce instructional programs and ser-

vices that we provide to our students, cutting the use of air conditioning units by only two hours during instructional time is the most plausible solution," she said. "I know there are parents that are concerned for their children's comfort and we are doing our very best to ensure that they are accorded the best comfort within PSS' means."

Sablan lamented that in the midst of a much-reduced appropriation for PSS and despite its sustained effort to

increase student achievement and provide students with needed resources and facilities, PSS is continually challenged to meet the needs of providing educational programs and services to its 11,000 students for the remainder of the fiscal year.

"It is unfortunate that PSS is in this situation given the financial hardship in the Commonwealth. And we appeal for the understanding of our parents, students, faculty, and staff," Sablan said. **(PSS)**

## NMI

From Page 1

reason for the increased federal money pumped into the CNMI since 2009, and ARRA is now winding down.

From 2001 to 2008, CNMI revenues exceeded federal grants, based on numbers from the Consolidated Federal Funds Report and completed annual CNMI single audits.

In 2001, CNMI gross revenue was over \$213 million, and federal grants were only over \$62 million.

This meant federal grants were only as much as 29 percent of local revenues. But as years went by, the percentage gap between federal grants and local revenues edged closer until crossing paths in 2009, with federal grants exceeding local revenues.

In 2002, CNMI revenue totaled \$195 million, and federal funds were only \$66 million.

A year later, local revenue went up a bit to \$200 million and federal grants were at \$89 million.

In 2004, local revenue was \$210 million and federal grants, \$156 million.

CNMI revenue reached \$214 million in 2004 and federal grants were at \$119 million.

Local revenue went down to \$192 million in 2006, when federal grants went up to \$126 million.

In 2007, CNMI revenue was only at \$159 million and federal grants also went down to almost \$81 million.

Local revenue went up a bit to \$195 million in 2008. Federal grants also went up to \$111 million.

By 2009, CNMI revenue was only \$137 million, while federal grants went up to \$147 million.

The CNMI has yet to have a completed single audit for 2010, but that year, federal grants to the CNMI were at a historic high of over \$189 million.

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan), a former House Ways and Means Committee chair, said the decrease in CNMI revenue was mostly a result of external factors such as the Asian economic crisis, the terror attacks in 2001 and the lifting of world trade quotas that led to the demise of the garment industry, slowdown in tourism, and the pullout of Japan Airlines.

But Yumul said one other way to look at the issue is the more aggressive federal grant applications by CNMI government agencies and private entities, resulting in an increasing amount of federal grants coming CNMI's way.

He cited as an example an \$8 million telecommunication grant awarded to

IT&E.

Yumul also said the federal government is also dealing with shrinking resources that need to be spread across its states and territories yet the CNMI managed to get increasing amounts.

"We also have to give credit to our grant writers, managers, and others for making sure we get more federal grants, whether it be formula or competitive grants," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Yumul was among those who attended the first series of comprehensive grants workshop that the CNMI delegate is hosting. The grants workshop, funded by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs, continues this week.

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) separately said that given that the CNMI is now getting more federal grants than it could generate in revenue locally, the CNMI should continue to work on its single industry—tourism—and develop others such as agriculture.

## Grants workshop

The grants workshop is being conducted by Charles Hester, a certified public accountant who has extensive federal experience with grants and audits. He has been conducting the workshop under the auspices of Graduate School USA, one of the federal government's continuing education providers of choice.

On Friday, he awarded certificates of completion from Graduate School USA to participants who completed Part I of the comprehensive grants workshop held in Room D1 of the Northern Marianas College in As Terlaje.

Hester is conducting Part II of the workshop this week. The workshop is provided free of charge to participants.

Rota and Tinian residents were also able to join through videoconferencing connections.

Sablan, in welcoming individuals from government and private entities on Tuesday last week, lauded them for their willingness to take advantage of an opportunity to improve their grants skills.

"They are learning about planning, obtaining, and successfully completing grants and contracts; administrative requirements and cost principles for grants and other agreements; and effective fiscal management of grants," he said.

Sablan said they put an initial cap of 75 for the grants workshop but they had to increase it to 120 to accommodate more people.

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Retirees' meeting today

There will be a meeting for all CNMI retirees and beneficiaries on Saipan to discuss the Retirement Fund's current status and legislations regarding retirement. The meeting will be held today, Feb. 28, at Kagman Community Center, and March 1 at the Multi-Purpose Center, both starting at 6pm. **(PR)**

### DEQ brigade turns eye to Hidden Beach

The Division of Environmental Quality's cleanup brigade will be picking

up trash at Hidden Beach in Talafofu, Saipan this Saturday, March 3, 2012, starting at 8am.

If you would like to volunteer, meet the DEQ representatives on Saturday at the Kingfisher Golf entrance. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will get a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will get a green

brigade t-shirt.

Last month, the Feb. 4 cleanup at Tank Beach had over 35 volunteers participating. Thanks to Hopwood's STUCO members, Kagman High School, Laolao Bay Golf/MAFEA, CUC, Tau Gamma Phi Fraternity, and other volunteers, 380 lbs of trash was removed from the beach and properly disposed of. D&Q provided refreshments.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500/1. **(DEQ)**

## LABOR

From Page 1

*Saipan Tribune* learned that federal investigator Dean Tenorio from the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division made a surprise visit to the hospital on Friday and asked employees about issues surrounding the hospital.

Staffers, who agreed to speak on condition of anonymity, shared with *Saipan Tribune* that most of the questions focused on their delayed salaries and housing benefits, among other issues.

The U.S. Department of Labor in San Francisco confirmed yesterday the ongoing probe against the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., which operates the sole public hospital in the CNMI.

"Yes, we are able to confirm that the department's Wage and Hour Division is conducting an investigation," Deanne Amaden, regional director of public affairs, told *Saipan Tribune*.

She declined, however, to further comment, saying it is the agency's policy to wait until an investigation has been fully concluded before giving out any further information. This, she said, ensures that the agency gathers pertinent information and allows for due process.

Amaden also refused to disclose if the investigation was prompted by spe-

cific complaints of hospital employees. She explained that any probe may be the result of an employee complaint, a complaint received by a third party, or because of planned inquiries or investigations to assess compliance with federal labor laws administered by the Labor Department.

The continued lack of funds for the hospital has resulted in delays in the salaries of mostly non-essential personnel, including the issuance of their housing perks, which is almost four months behind by next week.

*Saipan Tribune* learned that some hospital personnel, including some nurses in the outpatient clinic, failed to get their wages on time last Friday. Sources revealed that this was not the first time this happened since hospital operation was taken over by the healthcare corporation in October last year.

Employees said their housing allowance checks have been delayed since December and there have been no assurances as to when the checks will be issued, if at all. The housing benefit checks are usually issued on the first week of each month. It amounts to \$600 for unmarried employees and \$800 for those with families. This benefit was created to attract off-island hires to come to Saipan.

Many employees said they feel more demoralized with the current situation of the hospital.

"As much as we want to understand the financial situation of the corporation and the hospital, we can't deny the fact that it is truly affecting our families. If this situation continues, I don't think we can still stay and serve the people as much as we want to," one employee said.

Some employees said that they cannot blame chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta for these issues as he just inherited the problems from previous hospital administrations.

The corporation has 600 employees on three islands. The Legislature appropriated it only \$5 million in seed capital.

Besides the delayed wages and housing allowance, some employees' health insurance coverage may also be terminated following disclosure that their premiums for four pay periods have not been remitted to insurance carriers.

*Saipan Tribune* learned that many employees who are enrolled in the 401K retirement plan and members of the Commonwealth credit union are also affected as their payments have also not been remitted in a timely manner, affecting their loans or accounts.

Budget constraints have also resulted in other cuts at the hospital, including repairs and maintenance of hospital equipment and coverage of areas that need to be cleaned by an outside contractor.

## Senator back from four-month cancer treatment

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**  
haidee\_eugenio@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan), back on island after a four-month treatment and recovery for throat cancer in California, said yesterday he is seeking re-election on Nov. 6 under Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's Republican Party.

He said he is ready and able to continue his duties and responsibilities as a senator, even as he has yet to fully recover.

Crisostimo arrived on Saipan on Friday, four months since leaving in October to undergo radiation and chemotherapy for his throat cancer at the University of California at Los Angeles Medical Center.

"Being away is saddening for me," Crisostimo said in an interview at his office after attending the joint session of the Senate and House of Representatives yesterday.

Crisostimo received a warm welcome from his colleagues at the joint session.

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) said "it's good to have him back with us."

"We continue to pray for his full recovery. We pray that he and his family can get back to their normal life and for him to return to his official duty as a senator. We missed our colleague," Manglona said.

Crisostimo's voice remains hoarse for now due to the treatment but he said it will go back to normal once he fully recovers.

"In the beginning, I couldn't even speak," he said, as he also shared how he had kept in touch with his office staff, colleagues, and constituents while in California. Even while off-island, he communicated his desires to have some of his bills and resolutions passed.

Crisostimo said his chemotherapy started in November, while

radiation began in December.

The father of three thanked those who prayed for his and his family's wellbeing during his treatment. During his four months off island, he'd also visit Las Vegas where he has a house. His wife May was with him the whole time.

The senator said being away helped him widen his perspective about the economy and governance. He said the CNMI should work toward self-reliance and financial independence from the United States. He also defended the Taiwan trip of six lawmakers, saying the CNMI should learn as much as it can from highly developed countries to develop its own industries such as agriculture and perhaps biotechnology.

Crisostimo said he hopes that someday the CNMI will become an independent nation, and not a Commonwealth of the United States.

## Grant amounts for SHEFA online scholars slashed

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Online scholars of the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance will see a large cut in their financial awards after the board reclassified online students into on-island ones who must receive lower amounts compared to off-island recipients.

According to SHEFA administrator Henry Hofschneider, this cut will take effect starting fall 2012 semester.

Online scholars are usually

## Warrant out for robbery suspect

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho issued yesterday a bench warrant for the arrest of another suspect in a robbery case where the victim, a 65-year-old masseur, was also beaten up.

Camacho issued the bench warrant for Joshua Basaliso after he and his court-appointed counsel failed to appear at yesterday afternoon's change of plea hearing.

Camacho imposed a \$500 cash bail for Basaliso's temporary release once he is arrested.

Assistant attorney general Eileen Wisor, who appeared at the hearing, recommended the bench warrant.

Basaliso pleaded guilty to assault and battery in October 2011 as part of a plea deal. As part of the agreement, the Office of the Attorney General will recommend a sentence of 90 days that he has already served in jail.

Basaliso testified for the government in the trial of his cousin and co-defendant, Nestor C. Taitano. He admitted beating up and taking the wallet of Chinese national Guoxi Liang in San Antonio on April 2, 2011.

Taitano was acquitted and released. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

given the following financial awards: grant-in-aid, \$800 per semester; \$1,000 each for field of study and incentive programs.

For off-island online students, SHEFA provides \$1,200 for grant-in-aid recipients; \$1,000 for field of study; and \$1,500 for incentive recipients.

Starting next semester, the award for on-island online recipients will be applied to all online applicants.

Hofschneider said the reduction will bring substantial savings to SHEFA.

"The revision was a necessity out of consideration of an applicant's real purpose of relocating from Saipan. It is difficult to accept that anyone would relocate for the real purpose to enroll at an online college or university," he told

Saipan Tribune yesterday.

He said the board will amend its rules and regulations to include this policy change.

Saipan Tribune learned that pursuant to the policy of SHEFA, financial awards are provided to eligible students who physically attend classes on campus. Despite this, previous SHEFA boards approved expanding the program to on-line students and gave the same amounts issued to off-island and on-island scholars.

SHEFA has an average of more than 30 online students per semester.

Because of the uncertainty of the government's finances, Hofschneider said that grants awarded to online scholars may be terminated or suspended if the board deems it necessary.

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# HEALTH WALK

## MARCH 03, 2012



### Registration Information:

**Saipan: 5:30am to 8:00am – 13 Fisherman Pavilion**  
**Tinian: 6:00am to 8:00am – Tachog'na Beach**  
**Rota: 6:00am to 8:00am – Joaquin M. Ogo Softball Field**  
**– Dr. Rita Hocog Inos RJSHS**

Original was designed in 2009 by Winona Blanco-Maratita  
12<sup>th</sup> Grade Tinian High School



*Northern Mariana Islands*  
**RETIREMENT FUND**  
*"Investing For The Future Financial Security Of Our Members"*

**NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS RETIREMENT FUND**  
**WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION**  
**GROUP HEALTH AND LIFE INSURANCE TRUST FUND**

**FINANCIAL AUDITS**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS NO. RF12-005**

**OPENING DATE: February 6, 2012**

**CLOSING DATE: March 8, 2012**

The Board of Trustees of the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund is soliciting sealed proposals to perform a financial audit of the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund (NMIRF), Workers' Compensation Commission (WCC), and Group Health and Life Insurance Trust Fund (GHLITF) for the fiscal years ending September 30, 2011 and 2012. To receive the RFP package, you may mail, fax or e-mail your request to:

Richard S. Villagomez, Administrator  
Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund  
P.O. Box 501247 CK  
Saipan, MP 96950-1247  
Fax No. 670-664-8080  
E-mail: [administrator01@nmiretirement.com](mailto:administrator01@nmiretirement.com)

There will be a pre-proposal conference on Monday, February 13, 2012, at 9:00 am in the Fund Conference Room, Capitol Hill Saipan. Questions regarding the project must be submitted in writing to Richard S. Villagomez, Administrator, Fax No. (670) 664-8080 or emailed to [administrator01@nmiretirement.com](mailto:administrator01@nmiretirement.com), no later than February 16, 2012 at 4:30 p.m.

The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in a proposal if doing so is the best interest of the Fund. All proposals shall become the property of the NMI Retirement Fund.

//s// Richard S. Villagomez  
Administrator

## IN TERMINATION OF ROTA PUBLIC HEALTH CHIEF

## Rota mayor, councilman sued for alleged conspiracy

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_deltorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Crispin M. Ayuyu is suing Rota Mayor Melchor A. Mendiola and Rota municipality councilman Arvin C. Ogo, accusing them of conspiring to unlawfully terminate him last year as resident chief of the Rota Department of Public Health.

Ayuyu, through counsel Ramon K. Quichocho, is suing the two officials and the Rota Municipality in the Superior Court for retaliatory discharge, breach

of contract, denial of due process, and conspiracy to deprive him of property.

He is seeking unspecified damages, attorney's fees, and court costs.

*Saipan Tribune* left messages with Mendiola yesterday requesting comments but he did not return call as of press time. *Saipan Tribune* also tried but failed to contact Ogo.

Mendiola appointed Ayuyu on Jan. 11, 2010, to be the acting resident chief of the Rota Department of Public Health. The 13<sup>th</sup> Rota

Municipal Council confirmed Ayuyu's nomination on Feb. 24, 2010. According to Quichocho in the complaint, his client's employment status was changed to permanent resident department head effective that same day.

Quichocho said that Mendiola instructed Ayuyu sometime in 2011 to hire the mayor's "very close associate," who was an applicant for a vacant position at the Rota Health Center. Ayuyu reportedly refused as a more qualified person had applied for the position. This allegedly an-

gered the mayor.

In June 2011, the Rota Health Center was not paying for the services of its nurses due to a lack of appropriated funds. Quichocho said his client then discovered that lapsed funds of the Rota Health Center account were available to pay the nurses.

Quichocho said that Mendiola was, however, "reserving or hiding" the available funds for pet projects, travel, and other nonessential purposes, so he kept giving Ayuyu excuses that the funds were not available because the

Fitial administration had already exhausted all available funds for the Rota Health Center.

The lawyer said that in July 2011, Mendiola and Ogo designed a plan for the mayor to go off-island so that Ogo will be the acting mayor.

On July 19, 2011, Quichocho said, Ogo became the acting chairman of the 13<sup>th</sup> Rota Municipal Council and, as acting mayor, terminated Ayuyu's employment "effective immediately."

Quichocho said that Mendiola was constitutionally required to appoint resident department heads, in consultation with the head of the respective Executive Branch department, but neither

the mayor nor Ogo consulted with the Public Health secretary before terminating Ayuyu's employment.

The lawyer said that the CNMI Constitution provides only two ways for the presiding officer of a municipal council to serve as acting mayor: physical disability or mental disability of the incumbent.

"As everyone who has seen Mendiola after July 19, 2011, can attest, [he] is not 'physically' disabled," Quichocho pointed out.

Quichocho said that Ayuyu's termination was due in part to his reporting potential violations to Mendiola, as the mayor had other spending ideas.

## Housing corporation auctions off three properties

## » NMHC eyes wholesale auction of properties

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. sold three properties in the two auctions they held earlier this month.

Mortgage and Credit Division manager Jesse Palacios said during Thursday's board meeting that the auctions were

held on Feb. 7 and 14.

In the Feb. 7 auction, Palacios said they sold only one of the six properties that were auctioned off. The lot is located in Kagman and was bought for \$45,000. He noted that the buyer is one of their clients in the Home Investment Partnership Act or HOME program.

According to Palacios, they were expecting to sell another property but the prospective buyer was not able to attend the auction.

In the Feb. 14 auction, Palacios

said they managed to sell two out of the nine properties: one in San Vicente for \$53,000 and another in Kagman for \$41,000.

The sold properties were among the 32 properties that NMHC bought back from the Rural Development program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Of the 32 properties, 16 remain unsold, Palacios said, adding that an RD client updated his account and made a payment at the auction.

Palacios disclosed that they

would like to have more people take part in their auctions. Another one is scheduled next month.

"The proceeds of these auctions go to a reserve account that we are building for future USDA RD accelerated loans that will be foreclosed upon," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

For now, Palacios said that the only loans they are giving out to low-income families come from the HOME program.

## Wholesale auction

At the meeting, board chair Marcie Tomokane suggested

that for next month's auction, the corporation should do a "wholesale auction" of all the properties they own rather than the "piecemeal" auction the agency is doing right now.

"It [piecemeal auction] is good for the newspaper business but some people, when they see a wholesale listing, especially real estate developers, they want to come in and grab the whole thing," said Tomokane.

While the corporation is not restricted from doing a wholesale auction, legal counsel Vicente Salas said the agency should also consider the issue of "manageability" or having more people in one room for the auction. He suggested that the auction, in that case, be held in a bigger venue such as the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

Tomokane noted that separate wholesale auctions should also be conducted on Tinian and Rota to be "fair."

## Eviction?

Tomokane also proposed that those occupying corporation properties and do not have a monthly rental or lease-to-own agreement should be evicted

due to liability issues.

"Actually this is the first time that I've said it but I think it's the proper way and the right way to do it because unless we procure general liability insurance, we're going to have those borrowers and families that are staying in a home that they don't own, more so if anything happens to the building or the house, we're still liable. We need to protect ourselves," she explained.

Board member Diego Songao raised concern about evicting people, saying they should first be informed in a letter about the need to vacate the property if they do not want to take the lease-to-own option.

Salas noted that these former tenants have been given notices. Palacios concurred that they did give out the lease-to-own letters that also serve as a 30-day eviction notice if they do not avail of the lease-to-own option.

Palacios informed the board that only one of their properties is currently occupied and that the tenant had been given the lease-to-own letter, and that the tenant expressed interest about the option in his Feb. 21 letter to the corporation.

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION FOR BID  
IFB12-OHS-044 (A)(B)**

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 27, 2012 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF THREE (3) LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERALS AND ONE (1) COLOR COPIER MACHINE FOR THE OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY"**

PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS MAY RETRIEVE A COPY OF THE COMPLETE CONTENTS OF THE INVITATION FOR BIDS AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PROJECT MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO MR. CARL DELA CRUZ, OHS PROCUREMENT OFFICER BY E-MAIL TO ohs.delaacruz@gmail.com NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, MARCH 14, 2012.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ MARVIN K. SEMAN  
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID  
ITB NO.: ITB 12-CJPA/NUTSE-049**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 12, 2012      TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"LEASE OF AN OFFICE SPACE FOR THE NURTURING TRANSFORMATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OFFICE"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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/S/ KEIKO ODAIRO  
BOARD PRESIDENT,  
NURTURING TRANSFORMATIVE &  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S

**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
BOARD OF PAROLE**

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

## Preliminary Hearing

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and LT. Governor Eloy Inos, through the CNMI Board of Parole, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992". Notice is hereby given that a Preliminary Hearing is scheduled for March 7, 2012, (Wednesday) at 10:00 A.M., at the CNMI Board of Parole Office, Capitol Hill Road, Building Number 1216, Saipan.

The following individual(s) will appear before the Hearing Examiner:

A. Parolee

1. DIAZ, David Tanaka Cr. Cs. No.: 01-0381E BOP No.: 10-005

If you have any question or information, please call the Parole Office at telephone numbers 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Rosa Ada Hocog  
Hearing Examiner

Date: 02/21/2012

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID  
ITB NO.: ITB 12-CRM-050**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 12, 2012      TIME: 1:30 P.M.

**"LEASE OF AN OFFICE SPACE FOR THE COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT - ROTA BRANCH"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D).

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/S/ RITA C. CHONG-DELA CRUZ  
ADMINISTRATOR - CRM

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
RFP12-DOF/EDP-029**

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 15, 2012 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"CNMI TAX SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES FOR DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, DIVISION OF REVENUE & TAXATION OFFICE"**

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS (7:30 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M., MONDAY THRU THURSDAY EXCEPT CNMI HOLIDAYS).

A PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD ON **MARCH 05, 2012 AT 9:00 A.M. LOCAL TIME**, AT THE DIVISION OF REVENUE AND TAXATION, DANDAN.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

/S/ LARISSA C. LARSON  
SECRETARY OF FINANCE

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
RFP12-MOT-014**

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 15, 2012 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

**"A/E SERVICES - INDEFINITE DELIVERY, INDEFINITE QUANTITY (IDIQ) CONTRACT FOR THE ISLAND OF TINIAN"**

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK CAN BE OBTAINED AT THE DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE, SAIPAN, OR AT THE TINIAN MAYOR'S OFFICE, TINIAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS (7:30 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M., MONDAY THRU THURSDAY EXCEPT CNMI HOLIDAYS).

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO JOE DELA CRUZ OR FAX TO (670) 433-1819 NO LATER THAN THE **CLOSE OF BUSINESS, MARCH 05, 2012**.

PROJECT FOR THIS RFP MAY BE FUNDED THROUGH LOCAL AND FEDERAL FUNDS. AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE, BECAUSE IT IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

/S/ RAMON M. DELA CRUZ  
MAYOR OF TINIAN AND AGUIGUAN

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
RFP12-OHS-047**

SUBMISSION: MARCH 22, 2012 • TIME: 3:00 P.M.

**"PURCHASE, DELIVERY, AND INSTALLATION OF MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT FOR ITS COMMAND AND INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS VEHICLE FOR THE OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY"**

COPIES OF THE RFP PACKAGE MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ANY QUESTIONS MUST BE SENT VIA E-MAIL TO ohs.delaacruz@gmail.com ATTN: CARL DELA CRUZ, OHS PROCUREMENT OFFICER. **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, MARCH 12, 2012**. UNTIMELY QUESTIONS MAY NOT BE ENTERTAINED.

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/S/ MARVIN K. SEMAN  
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S

## IN THE FEW MONTHS IT WASN'T IN THE STOCK MARKET: Retirement Fund's opportunity loss estimated at \$15 million

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

In just the few months it was absent from the international stock market, the CNMI Retirement Fund lost some \$15 million it would have otherwise earned, according to estimates by its investment consultant, Wilshire Consulting Associates.

Wilshire principal Maggie Ralbovsky told the Fund board Friday that the Commonwealth pension plan missed some "good months" in the market since liquidating its stock investments and transferring them to the CDARS program. The calculation, she said, is based on the Glidepath strategy it recommended in 2011.

Ralbovsky pointed out that the U.S. stock market bounced back from a negative return in the third quarter to post an impressive 12 percent total return in the fourth quarter, producing a modestly positive return of 1 percent for fiscal year 2011.

That was the time when the Fund stopped investing in the stock market

after the departure of its investment consultant and actuary. The Fund is not allowed to make international investments without these two.

In her presentation, Ralbovsky said the U.S. stock market is up nearly 52 percent in the last three years and 101 percent since March 2009. All broad market sectors, according to her, posted gains in the fourth quarter, led by a surge in the energy and industrial sectors.

According to Fund administrator Richard Villagomez, the Fund's portfolio is estimated at \$253.4 million as of Feb. 17, invested in the following areas: mutual cash and cash equivalent, \$164,021; Vanguard short term bond, \$68.6 million; PIMCO, \$75.1 million; CDARS bonds, \$74.3 million; Dreyfus general treasury prime, \$33,600; and JP Morgan, \$1.4 million.



Ralbovsky

### Undecided

Despite recommendations to cut the benefits of members and other beneficiaries, Fund board chair Sixto K. Igisomar said that the board has not reached any final action on the matter, citing the need for a "debate" on the issue with the public.

Igisomar said that any cut in benefits is complicated because of the board's fiduciary duty not to impair and diminish benefits.

The idea of reducing members' benefits was recommended to the board last year to save the Fund from near collapse. Its actuary, Buck Consultants, also presented several other options but none has been enforced to date.

According to Igisomar, the only way to do it is to put the proposal on the ballot for people to vote on. He hinted at the "impossibility" of making the cuts happen without this process.

Igisomar cited several instances when the board was excoriated by retirees who strongly oppose any benefit cuts. He said that public education is

important to make this happen.

House Speaker Eli Cabrera, (Rep.-Saipan) who was present in Friday's deliberation, expressed his support for the Fund and asked the board for any legislation that he can introduce to help the Fund's fiscal situation.

Although there are steps and measures being initiated at the Legislature—floating a bond, building casinos to help the Fund, and other bills proposing to give something to the Fund—Ralbovsky described all of them as non-immediate ways to save the collapsing pension program.

"We don't have the time to wait around [for these measures]," she said.

She pointed out that the pension obligation bond proposal has a weak point and that is the credit-worthiness of the CNMI government to repay the loan. She raised the same issue with the casino proposal, saying it will take time to realize.

"When it will happen? I think the 're-structure liability' is the only way to do it for now," she added.

Sasamoto noted, however, that there are "some jurisdictional issues with the Army Corps of Engineer" regarding the ponding basin. "But again, we're coordinating with CRM on this," he said.

Tomokane suggested that NMHC outsource the maintenance services and get at least three quotes from private firms, "if it's less than \$10,000."

Tomokane also instructed Sasamoto to find out with CRM how to go about with the maintenance of the property on a monthly or quarterly basis "so that we can include this in our yearly budget to clean that area."

## CRM raises ponding basin upkeep with NMHC

that it's not ponding water."

The Garapan ponding basin is a gated area behind the NMHC office and across the Commonwealth Health Center.

According to Sasamoto, Chong-Dela Cruz is requesting if the corporation could help provide manpower or the gasoline needed to care for the ponding basin.

Sasamoto said the CRM director wants the task done "before the typhoons come."

"I just asked the director to let us know what we're talking about specifically. I'm just waiting to hear back from them," he added.

Board chair Marcie Tomokane pointed out that NMHC owns the land where the ponding area is situated. "It is only right that we clean [it] up."



Sasamoto

## Judge denies ex-convict's bid to modify bail

Superior Court associate judge Joseph N. Camacho on Friday denied a motion to modify the bail conditions imposed on an ex-convict who is facing charges of conspiracy to steal a car and sell off its parts.

Camacho determined that Calistro Acosta Crisostimo's mother, the proposed third-party custodian, is elderly, very ill, and therefore not suitable to supervise the suspect.

Camacho also found out that the property bond being proposed is the same lot already used in Crisostimo's other active case.

Crisostimo is also facing contempt charges for violating his house arrest condition when he left to commit the present alleged crimes.

The judge remanded him to the Department of Corrections. Attorney Rosemond Santos served as counsel for the 28-year-old Crisostimo.

Santos asked the court to modify the current condition of no bail to a property bond and release to a third party custodian.

The government opposed the bail modification, citing Crisostimo's 16-year criminal history.

Police said a car belonging to Gwang Hee Chu that was parked at Moon Night Poker in Chalan Kanoa was stolen on Dec. 8, 2011. On Dec. 25, 2011, police officers found the car in Upper Navy Hill. Majority of the parts were missing.

A tip from Crime Stoppers led to Crisostimo's arrest last month. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



### Mount Carmel School

Post Office Box 500006, Saipan, MP 96950  
Tel: (670) 234-6184 / 234-7188 • Fax No. (670) 235-4751  
Email: mtcarmel@vzwpacifica.net • Web: <http://www.mtcarmel-edu.net>

## IMMEDIATE JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT ACCOUNTANT

Mount Carmel School, a Catholic 1st through 12 grades is accepting applications for the position of Accountant. Mount Carmel School enrolls over 250 students with over 20 professional faculty and staff, and is fully accredited by the Western Accreditation of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Applicants for the position will assume the responsibility of an Accountant situated at the Business Office of the school, assist in the day to day operation of the Business Office, and other business transactions of the Business Office as assigned.

**Pay Level/Step:** V Step 01-05

**Per Annum:** \$17,000.00 - \$19,133.65

**Minimum Requirement:** Graduation from accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree preferably in Accounting.

**Closing Date:** March 05, 2012

Interested applicants may obtain a detailed job description with qualification requirements and application forms at Mount Carmel School Business Office from 8:00 -11:00 a.m. and 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Application forms can also be downloaded from the school's website at <http://www.mtcarmel-edu.net> Required documents must be attached to complete application forms (1) Official copy of diploma/degree or Official transcripts, (2) FBI Clearance (only required after an offer for employment is made or an employment contract is signed), (3) police clearance (from jurisdiction of residence within the last three months), (4) resume. Completed applications and required documents may be submitted to Mount Carmel School Attn: Margaret C. Delacruz, President, P. O. Box 500006, Saipan, MP 96950, telephone number (670) 235-1201/3187. Mount Carmel School is an equal opportunity employer.

**Since 1952, continuing a tradition of Faith, Excellence, and Success.**

*Fully Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges*



## JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

It is the policy of the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) to limit hiring to qualified US workers, as restricted by CNMI law, and that equal opportunity be given to all qualified US worker applicants regardless of age, sex or sexual orientation, religion, marital status, political status, veterans status, disability or place of origin.

Opening Date: 02/21/12

Closing Date: 03/06/12

### JVA#12-001:

Pay Level:  
Annual Salary:  
Location:

### Trades Technician I

20/01-20/08  
\$14,388.82 - \$20,234.11\*\*  
Marianas Visitors Authority, Rota

### JVA#12-002:

Pay Level:  
Annual Salary:  
Location:

### Clerk III

12/02-12/08  
\$10,598.03 - \$14,193.06\*\*  
Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan

### JVA#12-003:

Pay Level:  
Annual Salary:  
Location:

### Marketing Trainee

12/02-12/08  
\$10,598.03 - \$14,193.06\*\*  
Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan

### JVA#12-004:

Pay Level:  
Annual Salary:  
Location:

### Community Project Assistant (Part-Time)

17/01-17/08  
\$12,431.54 - \$17,482.77\*\*  
Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan

\*\* The salary given will be determined by the qualifications of the appointee.

Interested persons may contact the Marianas Visitors Authority Office at (670) 664-3200/01 for more detailed information on job description. For consideration, a completed application must be submitted together with the required documents no later than the closing date of this announcement. A resume may be attached, but the application form must be filled out in full. MVA is an equal opportunity employer.

# Kilili donates \$250 to anti-cancer group

By CLARISSA V. DAVID  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan showed his support for cancer awareness efforts in the community by donating to the Commonwealth Cancer Association last Friday.

Sablan presented a \$250 check to CCA board members led by president Bud White and staffers at the non-profit organization's office in Gualo Rai.

Sablan said that Friday's donation is only the first of the several donations that he and the Kilili for Congress Committee plan to make to help organizations that have the most impact in the community.

CCA is a community-based non-profit organization dedicated to promoting cancer awareness and prevention as well as providing patient support services.

Sablan described the association as "very organized, very focused, and with a purpose and mission."

Sablan also recently donated some office chairs to Sr. Remedio school. "Where we can help, we help," he said.

White praised Sablan for making the donation "out of his own pocket and not from congressional office."

"It's very generous and we're very, very much appreciative...It's things like this that keeps us going," White told *Saipan Tribune*.

White is optimistic that CCA will receive more donations in the coming weeks leading to the Marianas March Against Cancer, the group's largest signature annual fundraiser for cancer programs in the Commonwealth.

CCA, White said, is working on getting federal grants and other funding to expand their community involvement through training more volunteers who can go out and inform the public about the importance of early detection and prevention for cancer.

In August 2011, about 30 volunteers graduated from CCA's six-week breast and cervical cancer health outreach training program and White said they want



Washington delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan hands the \$250 check to officers and staff of the Commonwealth Cancer Association in a brief presentation at the CCA office in Gualo Rai last Friday.

## 2012 MMAC has new major sponsor

Younis Art Studio, Inc. has been named a major sponsor of the 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer. Major sponsorship is conferred on companies that donate \$1,000-\$2,999 in cash or services.

"The 2012 MMAC committee is extremely grateful for the unending support we've received from Younis Art Studio. Their support in the fight against cancer is admirable," said 2012 MMAC overall committee chair Catherine Attao-Toves.

The Marianas March Against Cancer is the largest annual cancer fundraising event in the Northern Mariana Islands. It is the signature fundraising activity of the Commonwealth Cancer Association, a volunteer-led non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that ensures all funds raised are spent in the CNMI. Proceeds raised at the MMAC are spent on cancer awareness programs, cancer patient assistance and other cancer-related services.

"We have 12 confirmed teams who are currently selling luminaries and raffle tickets. Purchase a luminary in honor of a loved one who has won the fight against cancer or is currently undergoing cancer treatment. Or you may purchase a luminary in memory of a loved one who has lost the fight against this deadly affliction. Each luminary

will be placed inside a white bag and lit throughout the twelve hour event. For more information contact luminary committee chairwomen Diana Benavente at 483-8427 or email [dibenavente@hotmail.com](mailto:dibenavente@hotmail.com) or Kim Concepcion-Pritchard at 285-6904 or email [kimconcepcion@yahoo.com](mailto:kimconcepcion@yahoo.com)," said Attao-Toves.

"Our teams are also selling raffle tickets for only \$5 each. Raffle prizes up for grabs include two roundtrip Economy Class tickets to Honolulu or the U.S. plus \$300 in Travel Credit Vouchers courtesy of title sponsor Delta Air Lines," said Attao Toves. "We will also raffle off a Samsung smart phone courtesy of title sponsor IT&E."

The 2012 MMAC teams are 302nd FRG, Ahu, Ally/Saipan Community School, Aschoscho, Bodig, #Free Dave, IT&E/Saipan Southern High School, Marriage Encounter, Pacific Islands Club, Saipan Health Clinic/St. Jude Renal Care Facility, Take Care/Grace Christian Academy and Tan Holdings/Kagman High School.

The 2012 Marianas March Against Cancer will be held from 6pm to 6am on April 27-28 at the Hopwood Junior High School field in Chalan Piao. For more information call 285-1828, email [attaoc@yahoo.com](mailto:attaoc@yahoo.com) or visit [www.ccamarianas.org](http://www.ccamarianas.org). (MMAC)

to "double" that number this year so there will be more volunteers who can talk to men about prostate cancer and to women about early detection for breast and cervical cancers through mam-

mograms, breast self-examination, and pap smear tests.

"We want to have another training and we want to get more people on the ground, out talking to the community, because

it's only through awareness and early detection that we can detect cancer early," said White.

For more information, contact CCA at 682-0050 or email [cca@ccamarianas.org](mailto:cca@ccamarianas.org).

## WHO calls for a final push against leprosy

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—The World Health Organization warned Monday that the battle against the age-old scourge of leprosy is not yet over, with more than 5,000 new cases reported yearly in the Western Pacific, where the disease was declared eliminated in 1991.

WHO regional director Shin Young-soo said the Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Kiribati are three of 37 countries in the region that have failed to meet the target of lowering cases to less than one per 10,000 people—the health body's definition of leprosy elimination.

He cited the example of the Philippines, which was declared largely free of leprosy in 1998 yet still sees some 2,000 new

cases recorded yearly.

He told reporters that China has around the same number of new cases each year.

"This is unfinished business and we need to walk that last mile," Shin said.

He called on member countries not to be complacent because of the region's success in meeting the elimination target, to recognize that leprosy still causes much suffering and that more needs to be done to achieve true leprosy elimination.

The call was made at the start of a three-day meeting of national leprosy control program managers from the Western Pacific.

Leprosy is not a killer and is today easily cured. It affects mainly the skin but if left untreated, can damage nerves. It typically starts

as a light-colored patch on the skin that can go unnoticed because it causes no pain. In the worst cases, fingers and toes are lost or blindness occurs.

The bacteria that causes the disease multiplies very slowly, with an incubation period ranging from three to 20 years.

Philippine Health Secretary Enrique Ona expressed concern that the number of new cases yearly in the Philippines may be underreported.

He said the country is reviewing its leprosy program, and is educating the public that the disease is not easily transmitted and patients need not be ostracized by the community.

"This thing should be in the radar of every public health as

well as our general practitioners," Ona said. "I think this is a wake up call for us to be able to really eliminate it."

Alberto Romualdez, a former Philippine health secretary and head of a foundation that works to control leprosy, said combating the disease has been low on the country's health priorities because prevalence is low compared to major diseases.

He said the health reporting system was deficient and methods of looking for leprosy cases have not been updated.

Shin said there are more cases found among the lower classes because they have less access to health services.

He said the stigma of the disease has even prompted some families with an afflicted member to move away from their communities to hide in remote areas.

## Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Feb. 28, 2000

### DOLI calls for thorough review of reform proposal

There is a need for a thorough study that would identify whether economic benefits would outweigh the problems posed by a pending legislation in the House of Representatives, according to an analysis report prepared by the Department of Labor and Immigration. The report, which was submitted to the House Committee on Commerce and Tourism, recognized the economic benefits that can be derived from its implementation. However, DOLI also sounded the alarm for potential problems associated with the opening of the Commonwealth's immigration doors to more nonresident workers.

### House to DOT: Allow carrier to fly RP-Saipan route

CNMI legislators asked the U.S. Department of Transportation on Friday to allow Armenian Airlines provide direct charter flights between Saipan and the Philippines, in fresh attempts to alleviate air transport woes in the Northern Marianas. The 12th House of Representatives adopted a resolution over the weekend requesting the U.S. transportation department to grant a Foreign Aircraft Permit to Armenian Airlines to operate charter flights between Saipan and Clark Field in Pampanga, Philippines. The CNMI government, through the Economic Recovery and Revitalization's Aviation Task Force, has been trying to encourage other foreign carriers to provide air transport services to the island following Continental Micronesia's decision to stop direct flights to Saipan.

Feb. 28, 2001

### Gov't urged: Reduce labor costs

The CNMI government has been asked to initiate programs that would build up a strong local labor force to pave the way for a reduced cost of doing business in the Northern Marianas. This would help the Commonwealth mitigate current investor climate constraints. According to a report submitted to the Office of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio, building a local labor force would minimize the islands' dependence on skilled nonresident workers. The report said although labor cost in the CNMI, as seen by American investors, is low, Asian businessmen who are more likely to infuse fresh capital into the CNMI looks at current figures as high.

### Measures for \$1.4M US grants OK'd

The House of Representatives yesterday adopted a resolution authorizing the CNMI government to submit an action plan for the Community Development Block Grant application to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. House Joint Resolution 12-19 authorizes the government to submit applications for three federal programs worth \$1.4 million under the auspices of the US-HUD. Of the total amount, \$929,000 will come in a form of a Community Development Block Grants; \$413,000 would be for Home Investment Partnerships; and \$40,000 will be in a form of an Emergency Shelter Grant.

Feb. 28, 2002

### Torres: Community prosecutors in the works

Attorney General Robert T. Torres has begun moving on his plan to bring his office's services down to the level of the community through what he calls "community prosecutors." Torres said he has already met with Department of Public Safety Commissioner Edward C. Camacho and Criminal Justice Planning Agency Director Doris Pladevega to discuss the program and find ways of establishing and funding it. "I've given him [Camacho] an outline of the program because it would require not only working with community, civic and public agencies but it would also require cooperating with police officers to know the community," he said.

### Saipan factories earn OSHA's praise anew

Saipan's garment factories continue to earn praises from the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety & Health Administration for their commitment to improving employment and workplace standards. OSHA Regional Administrator Frank Strasheim, in a recent letter to Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association Executive Director Richard A. Pierce, said the most recent verification visits of 23 garment firms yielded encouraging results. He hailed the various factories for meeting and exceeding the expectations required of them under the SGMA-OSHA Excellence 2000 Partnership Agreement. "I truly believe the Excellence 2000 has improved the working and living conditions of the workers, which in turn, will allow OSHA to focus its resources in those areas where we are needed most," said Strasheim.

# IGIA meeting starts today

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Governors and congressional representatives from each of the U.S. insular areas will join senior-level officials from U.S. federal agencies this week in Washington, D.C. to discuss issues of importance to American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The 2012 Senior Plenary Session of the Interagency Group on Insular Areas will be held at the White House Eisenhower Executive Office Building on Tuesday morning, Feb. 28, 2012, from 8:30am to 11:45am; the IGIA is co-chaired by the White House and the Secretary of the Interior.

The following day, the Office of Insular Affairs will convene a working-level meeting of the IGIA that will be held at the

Campbell Auditorium in the Office of Personnel Management on Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 29, from 1pm to 5pm.

“Over the course of the last year we have worked extensively to best respond to the many issues raised at the 2011 meeting. We have made a lot of progress and my hope is that we will continue working together to develop unique approaches and strategies that address the challenges faced by our island communities,” said Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Tony Babauta, who co-chairs the IGIA on behalf of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar. David Agnew, recently appointed by President Obama to serve as the Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs serves as the White House co-chair. *(OIA)*

# Guam’s governor pushes for permanent Marine presence

By GOPAL RATNAM  
BLOOMBERG NEWS

The U.S. should station more Marines in Guam permanently instead of rotating them through the territory in the Western Pacific, Gov. Eddie Baza Calvo said.

“A permanent presence is better and we are pushing for more of that,” Calvo, a Republican, said in an interview at Bloomberg’s Washington office.

As part of President Barack Obama’s plans to realign U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region, the Pentagon is studying a proposal to rotate about 4,500 to 4,700 Marines and their families through Guam instead of stationing them on the island.

The Pentagon proposal to put a smaller force in Guam would amend a 2006 agreement with Japan that would have moved as many as 8,600 Marines from their current base in Okinawa to Guam by 2014. The Obama administration may send the remaining Japan-based Marines on rotations through Australia, the Philippines and Hawaii, according to people familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity about the private discussions.

If U.S. troops are stationed in Guam their “income taxes will stay with the government of Guam” and could be used to “pay for some of our infrastructure and services,” Calvo said. The tax funds won’t be available if the Marines are on short-term deployments, he said.

“Is there really savings” in rotating units every six months “as opposed to stationing them with their families for two to three years?” said Calvo, who was in Washington for a meeting of the National Governors Association. He said he would meet with White House officials and lawmakers on the base issue.

Guam already hosts U.S. Air

Force and Navy bases where the Pentagon deploys F-22 jet fighters made by Lockheed Martin Corp., B-52 bombers, Global Hawk Block-30 model surveillance drones from Northrop Grumman Corp., and Los Angeles-class attack submarines made by Huntington Ingalls Industries Inc. and General Dynamics Corp.

Accommodating 8,600 Marines on Guam would cost the U.S. about \$21.1 billion for improvements such as building roads and improving ports, water supplies and wastewater treatment facilities, the Government Accountability Office estimated in a June 2011 report. Some U.S. lawmakers have objected to the cost and asked the Pentagon to study alternatives.

In May, Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat, joined Senators John McCain of Arizona, the panel’s senior Republican, and Jim Webb, a Virginia Democrat and the chairman of the personnel subcommittee, in calling for reducing the planned Marine Corps expansion on Guam.

Instead, the lawmakers proposed rotating combat units based elsewhere and examining the feasibility of moving Marine Corps Air Station Futenma on Okinawa to Kadena Air Base, which is also on the Japanese island, while avoiding building a replacement facility. Local officials have complained about noise, pollution and safety issues at Futenma.

In passing the Pentagon’s fiscal year 2012 budget, Congress blocked funding for the relocation of Marines to Guam until the Defense Department provided a master plan. The Pentagon had to consider “alternatives that may provide the needed Marine forward presence at much less expense,” McCain said in a Senate speech in September.



## Position Vacancy Announcement

**Position: Vice President/General Manager (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 10 years experience managing full service 36 hole golf course, experience in developing and marketing and coordinating marketing strategies, knowledge of business management practices of golf course operation and hotel operation, assignment and projects for the golf course, maintain and grow membership and customer by promptly handling member and guest concerns and issues, ensure open communication and high visibility to members and guest by conducting daily walk through of the club, generate revenue by acting as sales manager for the entire golf club and resort, expand sales by initiating and monitoring effectiveness of monthly promotions, demand managements and demand creation strategies.

**Position: Executive Chef (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years experienced and training in culinary cooking and have graduated from a Culinary School, accounts for the management and supervision of kitchen staff and cooks, provides a consistently high quality of food product services to guests and customers, ensure that meals are produced, presented and served to the highest possible standards, monitors materials, supplies and equipment needs, ensure staff uphold and maintain current standards of hygiene and safety, ensure the kitchen maintains a high level of sanitary conditions in a accordance with and all applicable laws, statutes, and policies, communicate with staff in order to facilitate and conduct a team approach, monitor food trend and incorporate new styles and ideas to fulfill customer demands and needs.

**Position: Assistant Chef, Korean Cuisine (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 3 years in the preparation of Korean food, will be involved in Korean menu development, inventory, ordering/purchasing, food cost control, training, personnel management such as coaching, complies to all applicable Sanitation Codes, ensure efficient, safe and sanitary food production, preparation, presentation and knowledgeable of Korean food trends with focus on quality, experience in large catering or banquet functions, excellent communication skills in Korean and basic English to understand and follow recipe, able to communicate on all levels, including management, departmental and customer.

**Position: Chef de Partie (1)**  
**Qualifications:** 7 Years of cooking experience and training, responsible for the creation of high quality dishes, able to work independently, cooks consistently and enthusiastically on a high level, helps create and cook to perfection seasonal and including a five course modern gourmet menu, small selection of signature a la carte dishes, cooks and prepares for each meal service, controls incoming goods and stores food, vegetables, fruits, staple in a perfect conditions, guest oriented and able to converse with the clients, actively attends wine and general trainings, team building events and supplier visits to learn about local product, has fun cooking, is a sociable person, likes to work as a teamwork, and respects and actively works with colleagues.

**Position: Chief Cook (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 5 years of experience and training, knowledge of standards of food preparation, serves, and observes kitchen procedures, experience in kitchen management, train kitchen staff, monitoring and assessing performance of the kitchen staff to make improvements or take corrective action, direct the preparation, seasoning, and cooking of food, determine how food should be presented and create decorative food displays, ensure timely delivery of services, estimate amounts and costs of required supplies, instruct cook and other kitchen staff in the preparation, cooking, garnishing and presentation of food, monitor sanitation practices to ensure that employees follow standards and regulations.

**Position: Cook (6)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 3 years of experience and training, prepares or directs preparation of foods according to prescribed menus and recipes, takes inventory of supplies on hand and orders food supplies, ingredients and other consumables on a schedules basis as determined by menu and estimated number of customers, cleans and sanitizes all food preparation equipment and ensures that it is kept in safe and operable condition, knowledge of methods, materials, and practices of volume food preparation, sanitary methods used in food preparation.

**Position: Assistant Manager, Food & Beverage Department (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years of working experience and training. Must have supervisory experienced and training preferably in hotel and resort facilities, have experienced for all food and beverage services including banquet catering, bar/grill, dining restaurant, and outside beverage carts, must have cost control of all food and beverage outlets by helping in overseeing the purchasing of food, maintains effective inventory and shortage controls, work with the Executive Chef to develop an annual food and beverage plan and budget, ensure successful operation of special events, banquets, rentals, coordinates the delivery for all food and beverage service to the customer at the highest guest standard, supervise staff and operational during shift, ensure all of the services provided are immediate need of the customer, maintain and develop a dedicated team providing the highest quality of service and addresses all staffing issues in a fair and timely manner.

**Position: Wait staff (Waiter/Waitress) (5)**  
**Qualifications:** 2 years experience and training, must have preferably worked at a hotel or tourism industry, ability to listen to and understand through spoken words and sentences, ability to arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern, communicating with Supervisors, peers, or subordinates, handling and moving of objects, judging the qualities of things, services, or people, performing general physical activities, talking to others to convey information effectively, acting listening and service orientated.

**Position: Kitchen Helper (2)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 3 years of working experience, must be familiar with the dynamics of a professional kitchen is a plus, willingness to learn, time and space management skills, physical stamina, a friendly temperament, a desire to help out where needed and the ability to foster the creation and maintenance of a cohesive team, assist cooks, keep kitchen clean, perform a variety of food preparation task, assist with food and beverage service, receive and store supplies, sweeps and mops floors, segregates and removes trash and garbage and places, hoses out garbage container, washes pots, pans, trays by hand, scrapes food from dirty dishes and washes them by hand or place them in racks.

**Position: Assistant Manager, Front Office (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 2 years of experienced and training in the field of hotel and golf resort operation, must be organized, neat and professional appearance, pleasant, tactful and patient, able to communicate well with a wide variety of people, committed to providing good service, enjoyed dealing with people, ability to direct and control the activities of the Front Office, Reservations, deal with customer complaints, knowledge of a second language is a plus (write, read, and speak) computer literate with knowledge of a variety of computer software applications, and superior written and oral communications skills, ability to respond properly and take a supervisory role in any hotel emergency or safety situation.

**Position: Korean Concierge (1)**  
**Qualifications:** 3 years of experienced and training, must have worked in a hotel or tourism industry, communicate directly with guests, both in person and by telephone, provides information on facilities to Korean speaking guest at the golf & resort, provide information and services in Korean, must be able to offer the Korean guest in any number of special circumstances, good communication skills in Korean language is vitally important, provides all the information that the guest needs to enjoy their stay, good problem solving skills, good organizational skills, must be trained and experienced in tourism or hospitality managements, excellent customer service skills.

**Position: Supervisor, Japan Sales & Marketing (2)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 2 years experienced and training in marketing strategy for the Japanese market, must be fluent in the Japanese language as well as to read and write, experienced contacting and selling to Corporate level executives, experienced in Sales and Marketing must especially in the Japan markets, built and managed a network of marketing and selling Hotel and Golf product

and services, possess innovative business promotional and advertising activities, strong negotiating skills, knowledgeable of the Japanese customers needs, have strong demonstrations skills, must work with management team to create sales and marketing plans that includes to identify and target Japan Markets, identify potential Japanese clients.

**Position: Supervisor Pro Shop (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 3 years of supervisory experienced and training, able to lead, direct and motivate the sales team in order to achieve sales objectives, identifies appropriate business targets, provides a professional and excellent level of customer service with existing and new customers, supervises scheduled shift, completes all assigned duties, supervises sale associates, ensure that all employees adhere to company policies and procedures, knowledge of principles, techniques, and objectives of marketing, manages a sales program, knowledge of hotel management and philosophy.

**Position: Sales Representative, Pro shop (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years of training and experience in the field of golf operation, must maintain outstanding customer service, generating sales, merchandising, must be fully competent in selling, knowledgeable of cashing and receipt processing, knows how to operate a computerized point of sale cash receipts, inventory management system, ensure that each customer receives, ability to work varied hours/days, including nights, weekends and holidays as needed, must recognize security risks and thefts and know how to handle or prevent such situations.

**Position: Front Desk Supervisor (2)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 3 years of hospitality work, must have total understanding of all hotel front office procedures, know standard of cash handling, knowledge of computerized cash register systems, reservation system, must have experience in dealing directly with the public and acquired general knowledge of basic customer service skills, experienced and trained in the field of Front Office Operation, assist the Front Office Staff in handling customers in an efficient, gracious and professional manner and maintains a friendly, cheerful and courteous demeanor at all times.

**Position: Front Desk Clerk (2)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have at least 2 year experienced and training in hotel hospitality or tourism industry, must have good communication skills, professional attitude and organization, enjoy working with people, experienced in customer services, sales, ability to use a computer, handles cash, experienced in administrative skills, ensure guests billing is correct, must assist in general maintenance and inventory of Front Office supplies, be courteous and efficient with customers.

**Position: Front Desk Clerk, China/Korea Market (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Assist the front desk clerks in handling Korean and Chinese guests in an efficient, gracious and professional manner, responsible for the management, organization of the Front Office and related functions pertaining to the Korean and Chinese guests, respond and display a high degree of professionalism and integrity as well to a wide variety of people, enjoys dealing with people, computer literate with knowledge of a variety of computer software applications and superior Korean/Chinese written, and oral communication skills.

**Position: Executive Housekeeping (1)**  
**Qualifications:** 7 years experience and training is required, must have worked preferably at a hotel, responsible for the smooth, efficient, cost effective operation of the Housekeeping Department, inventory control, works closely with Front Desk Assistant Manager to resolve all room discrepancies, possesses good knowledge of all matters relating to the proper administration of the Housekeeping department, provides employee safety training to prevent accidents, maintains quality standards through inspection programs, follows and ensures compliance to all hotel control procedures by staff.

**Position: Housekeeping (2)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 2 years of experience and training cleaning hotel rooms, ensure clean, orderly attractive rooms in hotels, and must have training cleaning golf facilities, prepare a list of prospective check-outs, investigates complaints regarding housekeeping service and equipment, takes corrective action, operates various mechanized cleaning equipment, responsible for disposal of trash, waste and other disposable materials, conducts inventories to ensure adequate supplies, observe precautions required to protect hotel guests' property, and report theft or found articles to supervisors.

**Position: Chief Accountant (1)**  
**Qualifications:** must have bachelor's degree in public or business administration, accounting, finance or related field, supplemented by 5 years progressively responsible experience in business accounting, ability to understand, follow and confer written and oral instructions, ability to effectively supervise a staff comprised of entry and journey level professionals engaged in carrying out departmental functions, extensive knowledge of generally accepted standard accounting principles, established procedures, departmental guidelines and regulatory requirements.

**Position: Accountant I (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years of experienced and training, and a college graduate in the field of accounting or related field, maintain general ledger accounting system, analyze accounts and prepare account adjustment as needed, assist with fixed asset and inventory systems and record-keeping, perform a variety of complex, professional level accounting functions, maintain confidentiality of payroll and other related records, ability to prepare clear, concise and comprehensive financial, statistical and narrative reports, and perform complex financial, statistical, budgetary cost analysis and ability to perform complex accounting duties related to assigned activities.

**Position: Accountant (1)**  
**Qualifications:** 5 years work experience and knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles and procedures and budgetary principles, considerate knowledge of computers and their application in financial and accounting system, ability to prepare clear financial statement, establish tables of accounts and assign entries to proper accounts, use professional judgment, ability to plan, organize and meet rigid schedules and demanding timelines and seasonal workloads.

**Position: Information Technology Technician (1)**  
**Qualification:** Must have 5 years of experienced and training and a college graduate in Computer science, responsible for installing, maintaining computer hardware, software, networks, have proficient knowledge in computer hardware and software systems and programs, computer networks, network administration and network installations, computer troubleshooting, team building skills, analytical and problem solving skills, decision making skills, effective verbal, presentation and listening communication skills, effective written communication skills, computer skills including the ability to operate graphics and website development programs at a highly proficient level, good time manage.

**Position: Information Technology Assistant (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 2 years of experience and training and must be a college graduate of computer applications and operating systems, PC hardware and trouble shooting, repair procedures, principles and practices of computer and telephone support services, computer hardware and software applications, familiar with information technology policies and procedures, computer operations processing and procedures, communicate clearly and easily with user and vendors of varying levels of technical expertise.

**Position: Project Engineer/Facility Maintenance Manager (1)**  
**Qualifications:** 10 years of experienced and training, college graduate, is responsible to ensure that all Laolao Bay Golf & Resort facilities are maintained in the highest of standards in their operation, assists in implementation and coordination of maintenance, repair, renovations of Company owned and leased facilities, monitors contractors compliance to standards for various Company buildings, conducts initial review and evaluates bids for compliance with specifications, report building maintenance needs, respond appropriately to emergencies or urgent issues as they arise, manage and supervise and coordinates the work of the staff and the work of contractors, communicate clearly and concisely, maintain adequate inventory, preventive maintenance and repairs of equipment.

**Position: Supervisor, Electrician (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Have 7 years of training and experienced, and a college graduate, must have electrical trade qualifications, complies and adheres to the Occupational Safety and Health and Standards and practices, excellent communication and team building skills, must have computer systems skills, perform electrical work as required within their capabilities, maintaining a high standard of workmanship and abide by local statutes, performs skilled electrical installations, undertake modifications to plan & equipment repair electronic components of electrical equipment as required for continued operation, attend to production machinery breakdowns as required.

**Position: Mechanic Engineer (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years of training and experienced, must have graduate degree, is responsible for all mechanical installations maintenance programs, stress analysis, piping, process plants layout and mechanical building services, responsible in power plant engines and generations, evaluates equipment performance and operating conditions, proficient in the planning and control of work in a multi project, deadline driven environment, deep and thorough understanding of applicable regulatory requirements and industry practices, assumes accountability for the quality of mechanical engineering work.

**Position: HVAC Technician (1)**  
**Qualifications:** 7 years of experience and training, must have specialized knowledge to analyze and solve complex problems, continuous concentrated mental and visual effort to plan and perform complex work, strong physical exertion, responsibility for cost control, sustained high degree of attention required to prevent damage or waste, repair replace needs necessary to maintain equipment and systems, install heating, air conditioning, refrigeration systems and related equipment for the propose of providing comfort inside facilities, maintains tools.

**Position: Building Maintenance (2)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 3 years of working experience and training, must have standard maintenance skills and the ability to apply that knowledge safely in a structured environment, skill in operating maintenance and carpentry tools and equipments, activities and decisions, requires independent actions, judgment in solving common problems, must have tolerance for exposure to unpleasant elements, be able to positively interact with fellow workers, maintains and repairs a variety of building facilities and provides service for common mechanical, electrical, and building system devices.

**Position: Assistant Manager, Recreation Facility Attendant (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years of experience and training in golf industry, Must be able to communicate and supervise facility attendant employees, inspect golf equipment, structures, or materials, work with the public, assist others, monitor events, coordinates the work and activities of others, develop and build teamwork, knowledge of a second language is a plus, knowledge of the golf sport and rules is a must, generally work a flex schedule, often deal with unpleasant, angry or discourteous customers, work in a group or as part of a team, provide directions to customers, make sure that the customers follow golf etiquette and rules.

**Position: Supervisor, Recreation Facility Attendant (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years experienced and training and working in a golf industry, must keep things running smoothly, provide information about and the services the Company provides, keep equipment in working order, explain how to use equipment safely, provide information about rules, record details of attendance, reservations, make sure that people follow rules, communicate and supervise facility attendant employees, must be pleasant, neat in appearance, must be punctual and reliable, ability to work well with the public is very important, knowledge of the golf sport, responsible for work outcomes and results of other attendants.

**Position: Operations/Marshall (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have training and experience in the field of golf industry, must knowledge of the rules of the golf game is a must, ensures that an adequate pace of play is maintained, makes the golf game more enjoyable for everyone, enforces rules and regulations and control golf play on the golf course, enforces etiquette related to golf course usage, golf playing equipment and its recommended use, perform duties with significant independence, establish and maintain cooperative relationships with those in the course of the work.

**Position: Supervisor, Landscaping (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 7 years of experienced and training in the field of a golf course industry, must oversees the landscaping activities and supervises all landscaping personnel, work required judgment and initiative, planning, scheduling, organizing and directing work, training personnel, teaches and enforces safety regulations, monitors jobs both indoors and outdoors to ensure quality and compliance with job standards, performs duties of a landscaper, continuous concentrated mental and visual effort to plan and perform complex work, considerable external and or internal contacts to carry out responsibilities.

**Position: Supervisor, Greens keeper (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 7 years of training and experienced, must have worked preferably at a hotel and golf industry, establishes and maintain and repair programs for the golf course and the hotel, evaluates and determines the need for and scope of emergency repairs and supervises staff and contractors in performing work, establishes procedures governing employee and customer's safety, perform grounds maintenance, perform preventive maintenance to the equipment, applies insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers maintains and operate irrigation system, experienced and knowledgeable in tractor operation and mowing.

**Position: Greens keeper (14)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 2 years experience and training, must have working knowledge at a golf course, knowledge of methods and materials used in grounds and landscaped area knowledge of and ability to use hand and power tools and equipment, ability to operate trucks, light motorized equipment, physical strength, stamina and agility, assists in the construction of new greens, tees, and fairways, lays sod, and seeds tees, greens and fairways.

**Position: Nursery Workers (4)**  
**Qualifications:** Minimum of 2 years experience and training, must have working knowledge at a golf course, performs routine maintenance on equipment, move containerized shrubs, plants, greens, using wheelbarrows, carts, shovel or tractors, maintain grounds and landscaping, haul and spread topsoil, fertilizer, peat moss and other materials to condition soil, requires to be reliable, responsible, and dependable, pleasant to work with, displays good natured and cooperative attitude.

**Position: Machinist (1)**  
**Qualifications:** 5 years of experience and training, must have overall knowledge working with machines, of machines, knowledge of a machine structure, performs routine maintenance on equipment, determine when and what kind of maintenance is needed, requires physical activities and considerable use of the arms, legs and moving your whole body.

**Position: Fabricator & Assembler (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 10 years of training and experience, must be able to fabricates, assembles, installs, and repairs sheet metal products and equipment on the basis of knowledge of system operation, may work with aluminum, galvanized steel, stainless steel, or other sheet metal stock, frequent to constant standing, walking throughout shift on all types of surfaces, maintains a safe work environment must be able to plan, organize, must be able to read and understand technical information, manuals, material safety data sheets, work order.

**Position: Heavy Equipment Machinist (1)**  
**Qualifications:** Must have 5 years of training and experience, performs skilled tasks in the mechanical repair and maintenance of heavy trucks, earth moving, and related construction equipment including road graders, knowledge of hazards and safety precautions of the trade, operation and maintenance requirements of heavy duty construction equipment, work cooperatively with other employees, work safely without presenting a direct threat to self or others, performs incidental welding operations on equipment.

**Position: Golf Cart Mechanic (2)**  
**Qualification:** high school diploma, 3 years technical training or experienced in mechanical, dismantle engines, using hand tools and examine parts for defects, test and inspect engines to determine malfunctions, to locate missing and broken parts, perform routine maintenance such as cleaning and oiling parts, honing cylinders and tuning ignition system, ability to demonstrate good judgment when dealing with guests or other personnel, able to lift/carry supplies or equipment with frequent reaching, stooping, bending, and kneeling, extensive walking and standing.

**Drop off your resume at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort at the Front Office, Kagman Road.**  
**May submit resume online at: mada@laolabay.com**  
**WE ACCEPT APPLICATIONS UP TO FEBRUARY 24, 2012.**  
**NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE**  
**Saipan LauLau Development, Inc., dba Laolao Bay Golf & Resort is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider.**

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER  
Volume XXII, Issue No. 49Published daily at 2/F JP Center,  
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI  
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR  
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

### EDITORIAL

## Gas prices may fuel changes

The following editorial appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on Wednesday, Feb. 22:

**M**otorists stung by rising gas prices may be on their own in the short term, but it's vital that they learn how to cope—for the sake of their household budgets as well as the nation's fragile economic recovery.

The early arrival of springtime price increases at the gas pump is being fueled by factors beyond the control of most consumers.

There are fears stemming from tensions in the Mideast over Iran's nuclear aspirations, as well as speculation involving crude oil prices. Even without an escalation of the Iranian situation, the 10 percent increase in gasoline witnessed so far this year looks to be in place for some time, analysts say.

For this region and others that have seen refineries close, the hope for relief appears even more distant. In addition to two area refineries being recently taken down, the threat to shutter the large Sunoco Inc. facility in Philadelphia looms as a further strain on gasoline supplies—with a likely unpleasant impact on gasoline retail prices.

But if those developments help jolt Americans back to reality about the way they continue to use a finite resource that's only available in a volatile market, then the price spikes at least will have had some positive impact.

Drivers know the drill, since they've seen gasoline prices head for \$4 before: It means being less cavalier about extra road trips, exploring carpooling, switching to mass transit, or even inflating the tires on that old bicycle.

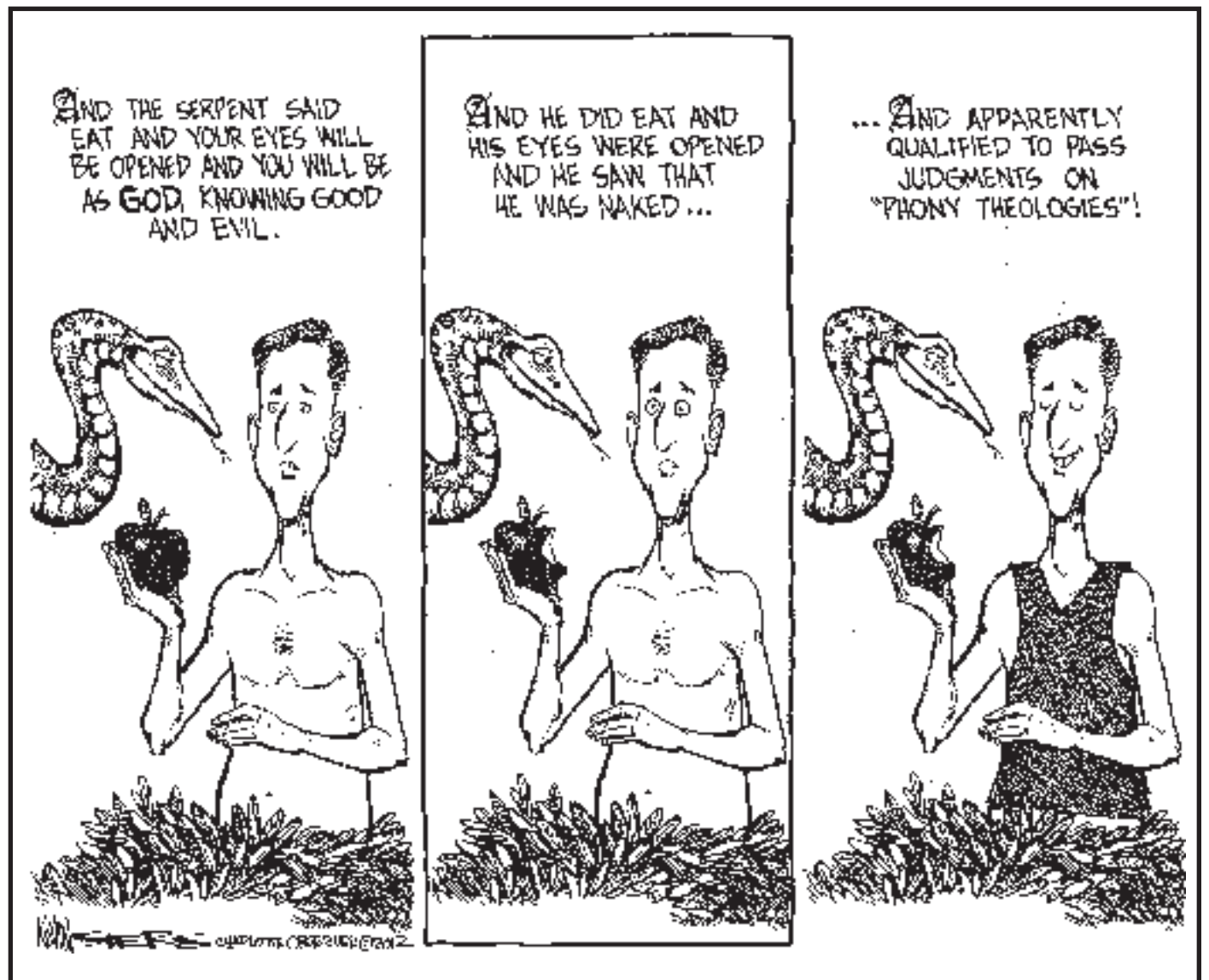
Using less gas is consumers' best weapon against higher prices. And if they can travel smarter, going fewer miles doesn't have to mean that the rest of the economy suffers—particularly the critical retail sector.

Of course, driving the most fuel-efficient vehicle is the best long-term strategy for keeping more dollars in consumers' hands to spend on things besides gasoline. According to Temple University small-business expert William C. Dunkelberg, a \$1 increase at the pump means that consumers have \$20 million less in their shopping budgets each day.

Any motorist who can't see over the roof of the SUV he's fueling at the self-service pump ought to be thinking about a more fuel-efficient ride. The nation's switch to smaller and hybrid vehicles has come in fits and starts, but it makes more sense than ever as both the price and supply of gasoline are strained.

The pain at the pump is a further sign, certainly, that the proposed 54.5-mile-per-gallon vehicle standard that President Obama expects to finalize this summer is needed more than ever. It should mean there will be more smart choices in the showroom that drivers will actually want to buy.

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## No, (fill in the blank) is not like the Nazis

Enough already with the Nazi analogies.

Invoking Adolph has been a noxious habit these last 10 years, a symptom of our debased political culture, and today the tactic seems more popular than ever. On the left and the right, Nazism is grist for the rhetorical mill. Politicians and commentators, to score points in the news cycle, continue to commit unspeakable acts of historical disproportion.

A few years back, for instance, Democratic Tennessee Congressman Steve Cohen complained that the Republicans were lying about President Obama's health-care reform—"a big lie, just like Goebbels." But Richard Land, a Baptist leader, saw things differently. He said Obama's health-care reform "is precisely what the Nazis did." Elsewhere, Hollywood director Rob Reiner said that the tea party was "selling fear and anger, and that's what Hitler sold." But Fox News chairman Roger Ailes had a different target. He said that the people who run National Public Radio "are, of course, Nazis. They have a kind of Nazi attitude."

This rote hyperbole, this disrespect for the genocidal victims of Nazism, has been common since the early George W. Bush era—Republican Sen. Phil Gramm said in 2002 that a Democratic tax plan was "right out of Nazi Germany"—but at least there was an upside. There was no talk of Nazis among our presidential candidates. The knee-jerk smears were confined to the lower strata.

Until now.

I'm referring, of course, to the rhetorically challenged Rick Santorum. What follows are verbatim remarks that the surging candidate uttered last weekend. You may need to read it twice, because Santorum tends to ramble through the English language like bison trampling amber waves of grain. He was arguing that Americans need to be vigilant about Obama:

"But remember, the Greatest Generation, for a year and a half, sat on the sidelines while Europe was under darkness, where our closest ally, Britain, was being bombed and leveled, while Japan was spreading its cancer all throughout Southeast Asia. America sat from 1940, when France fell, to December of '41, and did almost nothing. Why? Because we're a hopeful people. We think: 'Well, you know, he'll get better. You know, he's a nice guy. I mean, it won't be near as bad as what we think. This'll be OK.' Oh yeah, maybe he's not the best guy—and after a while, you found out things about this guy over in Europe, and he's not so good of a guy after all. 'But you know what? Why do we need to be involved? We'll just take care of our own problems. Just get our families off to work and our kids off to school, and we'll be OK.'"

Once you prune that verbal thicket, the point is clear. Obama is like that "guy over in Europe," the bad guy we ignored for too long;

By **DICK POLMAN**

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Dick Polman is a columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to him at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at [dpolman@phillynews.com](mailto:dpolman@phillynews.com); blog: <http://www.dickpolman.blogspot.com>.



if we don't wise up, America's latter-day Hitler will conquer us.

Naturally, when Santorum was asked whether he had likened the president to Hitler, he replied: "No, of course not." He said: "It's a World War II metaphor. It's one I've used hundreds of times."

Indeed he has, and that's the problem. On the Senate floor seven years ago, during a debate about filibustering judicial nominees, he said Democrats were behaving like "the equivalent of Adolph Hitler in 1942." Jewish groups complained that "Once again, Nazi imagery was used in a political debate, where it has no place," and Santorum issued the standard apology.

His latest outburst is disgraceful not merely because he equated Obama with Hitler, but also because he botched the actual history. It is factually wrong to say that America "did almost nothing" prior to entering the war. Recognizing the Hitler threat, FDR goaded Congress to pass the Lend-Lease law, which allowed the United States to ship material to Hitler's enemies—in today's dollars, \$620 billion's worth. We also shipped destroyers to Britain. And contrary to Santorum's faux history, we never saw Hitler as a "nice guy"—as evidenced by the numerous domestic boycotts of German goods during the '30s.

Newt Gingrich went the Nazi route last June, declaring during a debate that he would require Muslim Americans to sign a loyalty oath to work in his administration; after all, he said, "We did this in dealing with the Nazis"—an apparent reference to America's postwar de-Nazification program in Germany. It seemed over the top to equate Muslim Americans with Nazis, but Newt touts himself as a historian.

I can see why Nazi analogies are popular. Politicians and commentators want to grab our attention, which explains why Glenn Beck, during his first 18 months on Fox News, reportedly invoked Adolph 147 times. But that tactic doesn't stimulate debate; it stifles it. Regardless of what we may think of Obama, or the tea party, or NPR, a Nazi "metaphor" (Santorum's word) dishonors the tens of millions who were beaten, tortured, bombed, and sent up the chimney. Facile comparisons have no place in our civic discourse. By continuing to make them, we dishonor our own politics.

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## Bought in the USA

**B**orn in the USA by Bruce Springsteen in '84 redeemed a country on the throes of despair after Vietnam, Iran, and the Watergate. The album cover photo with the singer's hiene with a protruding red hanky, a rebellious bandana prominently displayed on one's rear end while turned back facing a section of a huge American flag, became an iconic image particularly from the libertarian streak in the American psyche. It was like the flower in Picasso's *Guernica*, asserting hope-against-hope in the midst of devastation.

We are not suggesting that the times are similar, although the recession of 2008, with the federal bailout of "banks that are too big to fail," did usher Obama's era of desperate change. Not exactly the type we were hoping for; in fact it was a highly questionable act from a president elected with a populist mandate that might cost him a second term were it not for the bumbling bungling Republicans, but a look at the big picture of Europe on death convulsions finally gasping its last at glory after 500 years of empire leads us to think that Obama's action was at once altruistic and in self-defense. We still hold and live off the financial structures of the world to which the euro practically hinges!

Our title alludes to China and the USA that are suddenly one in the total commercial captivity of everyone's wallet and pocketbook, though this is just as true to the global Third Industrial Revolution. China and the U.S. differ only in their focus of engagement, with the U.S. riding high on financials being preeminent in the use of its national currency, while China herds the production line with its cheap but efficient labor.

The marketing of their goods and services both appeal to subconscious yearnings. On the financials, it treads on fear. We are seduced to borrow; the credit card is the national ID of the blue-blooded American, and the emergent glocal citizen. All told, every American household is now at more than \$10,000 in indebtedness, and we do not count mortgages, college loans, and the like.

As banks hold us to our future earnings, they protect their flanks with insurances and assurances against default, and the market births the derivatives' game of Ponzi operations, sustainable for as long as assets continue to be fueled by a cycle of growth. Most of unregulated growth is, however, illusory, bound for a bubble burst.

In this century, the real estate market around the world is the engine of growth. A piece of real estate like Marpi finds a developer that lays out a development scheme, usually funded from government capital funds, which guarantees the appreciation of the value of the land. That is the starting point of all kinds of financial transactions that spread out in time, sucks every conceivable fear-allaying transaction, bearing all kinds of interest earnings.

We are familiar with the housing bubble that struck the United States not too long ago. My sister's mortgage in Hawaii is now higher than the market value of her house. There are about 6 million completed units available in the China market, built because real estate investments came pouring in, yet the cranes on unfinished condos and apartment units dot the skyline of any of its major city, as hovels and old *hutongs* (e.g., servant quarters around the Forbidden City in Beijing) remain the dwelling of many of its rural folks allured to the promise of the glitter that is the magnet of urban centers.

"Allure" is the key word. The newest in marketing gimmick in shopping malls and department stores around the world is the created and intentional Zones and Aisles of Seduction. Marketers have become so sophisticated that they now design and designate a section of a mall and grocery store to entrap certain personality types who respond to tested stimuli, and there lies the journey of some empty wallets, bought unnecessary items, and advanced forms of purchasing addictions.

Why, even the U.S. presidency is now touted as an item for sale! The Republicans are lining up the money to fund SuperPACs that

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergara2031@aol.com) previously taught at San Vicente Elementary School on Saipan and is currently a guest lecturer at Shenyang Aerospace University in China.



pay for attack ads on TV against Obama, projecting a "Muslim socialist not-born-in-the-USA African" image without saying so, treading on the climate of fear that is as thick as the Midwest snow this winter-spring. Two Republican millionaires kick in two million; the Obama camp pull in the same amount from 200,000 \$2-\$10 donors. Do the math on who is ahead.

The injunction against usury, long championed in the Levant from which classical Judaism, Christianity, and Islam derived their aversion to moneylenders, is what economists call "phantom" wealth. Profit from lending one's accumulated media of exchange produces illusory wealth, period. When the United States earns 30 percent of its GDP on financials, we should expect every rabbi, preacher, and Imam mounting their podia with ethical tirades. That they don't shows how far we've come to accept, (and GHU!), even adore, the notion that everything is Bought in the USA!

Lest we are perceived as being anti-wealth, we delight in the additional integer on our bank account as much as the next guy. Judicial utilization of resources, the production of the same to promote healthy and wholesome living, and the efficiency of exchange between producers and users, are legitimate arenas for the creation of wealth. As Pellegrino keeps urging: Let's just do it!

Then, there is the casino, Brought into the USA! But that will have to wait for another reflection.

## In praise of war correspondents

By **TIMOTHY M. PHELPS**  
LOS ANGELES TIMES

**M**arie Colvin and I covered our first combat together in 1986, after the U.S. bombed Libya. She was 30, pretty, ambitious and talented. She soon had Col. Moammar Gadhafi and his aides in her thrall and parlayed her many scoops for United Press International into a job as a foreign correspondent for the *Sunday Times* of London.

I last saw her a year ago, in Cairo during the revolution. Three decades of bearing witness to war showed in her face: I recognized her only from her black eye patch, which she had worn since a hand grenade destroyed her left eye in Sri Lanka in 2001. She seemed sadder and lonelier, and it was no wonder, given what she had been doing all those years.

Other correspondents cover conflicts for a few years and move on. Marie made war a steady diet. She was at the front lines in Iraq (during three different wars), Chechnya, Gaza, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Libya and many other places. She had defied death so many times, she seemed immortal. But then, on Wednesday, she was killed by a rocket while covering the conflict in Syria.

Her death came less than a week after that of Anthony Shadid, also in Syria. The *New York Times* correspondent—a friend from the old days and a former colleague—had sneaked into Syria to report on the violence there and apparently succumbed to an asthma attack triggered by the horses of the guides leading him back to Turkey.

Marie would not have been in the rocket's path, and Anthony would not have been near those horses, if they had not considered it their duty to tell the world what was happening to the civilians of Syria.

Anthony's calling card was his fluency in Arabic and the elegance of his writing. People in the Arab world are often portrayed one-dimensionally in the Western press, partly because correspondents are able to talk to them only through an interpreter. Born in Oklahoma City and educated at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Anthony went to Cairo as a reporter for the Associated Press, determined to master the language of his grandparents and to use his skills to convey the complexity of

life in the Middle East. In his quest to do so, he was shot in the shoulder while covering the West Bank in 2002 and captured by the Libyan army and held for a week last year.

I am often asked why journalists willingly put themselves in harm's way. Anthony was a star, with two Pulitzer Prizes, who had nothing left to prove. Marie, who had been married but was childless, had more combat experience than any general but had no desire to stop.

Part of the reason war correspondents keep going is that there is thrill in danger, a thrill exacerbated by the closeness of death. But the larger, much more important answer is that they feel an overwhelming sense of duty to those whose lives have been torn apart by conflict. Would President Obama have intervened in Libya last year if U.S. journalists had not been covering the plight of the people of Benghazi? Could more coverage from the Western press have whipped up sentiment to stop a genocide in which 800,000 people died in Rwanda in 1994? What will stop



AP

Marie Colvin, the London-based British war correspondent from Oyster Bay, Long Island.

the Syrian army from continuing to shell and shoot its own people if the stories of people like the 2-year-old baby whose death Marie chronicled in the days before her own death aren't being told?

Shadid told NPR's Terry Gross recently about an earlier illegal foray he made into Syria, saying he felt he had to go because "that story wouldn't be told otherwise." That story was so important, he said, "that it was worth taking risks for."

But not, as war correspondents often say to one another, worth getting killed for. As if we could prevent death by making that distinction.

A number of journalists lost their lives covering the war in Iraq. But not a single U.S. staff correspondent was killed by hostile fire during eight years of war. Now, in less than a year we have lost, among others, photojournalists Tim Hetherington and Chris Hondros in Libya, and Anthony and Marie, along with French photographer Remi Ochlik, in Syria.

Losing these courageous journalists is tragic. But there is also reason to worry about another tragedy in the offing: the pulling back of media outlets from covering wars.

Part of the reason is cost. Covering wars can be expensive, as we discovered in Iraq. There, Western news agencies took serious security precautions, buying expensive armored cars, hiring armed guards and carefully calibrating their reporters' movements with the help of security consultants. That wasn't feasible in fast-moving Libya, and it is impossible in Syria, where reporters have to operate mostly undercover because of restrictions on their movements.

Still, some editors, concerned about safety and facing shrinking budgets, have begun to pull back. Indeed, Marie's editor told her mother he had told her to leave Homs, that it was too dangerous. Marie had promised to leave after one more day. Now, with Homs surrounded and without a functioning morgue, it is unlikely she'll return home even in death.






No editor wants to place a correspondent in jeopardy. But I know that Marie and Anthony would not want their deaths to be used to justify retreating from dangerous but important journalism.

Timothy M. Phelps, an editor in the Los Angeles Times' Washington bureau, covered the Middle East for Newsday from 1986 to 1991.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph with gusts to 35 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°

### Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲87 ▼78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲87 ▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲89 ▼78
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	▲90 ▼80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲84 ▼79
Kosrae	Showers	▲84 ▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲85 ▼79

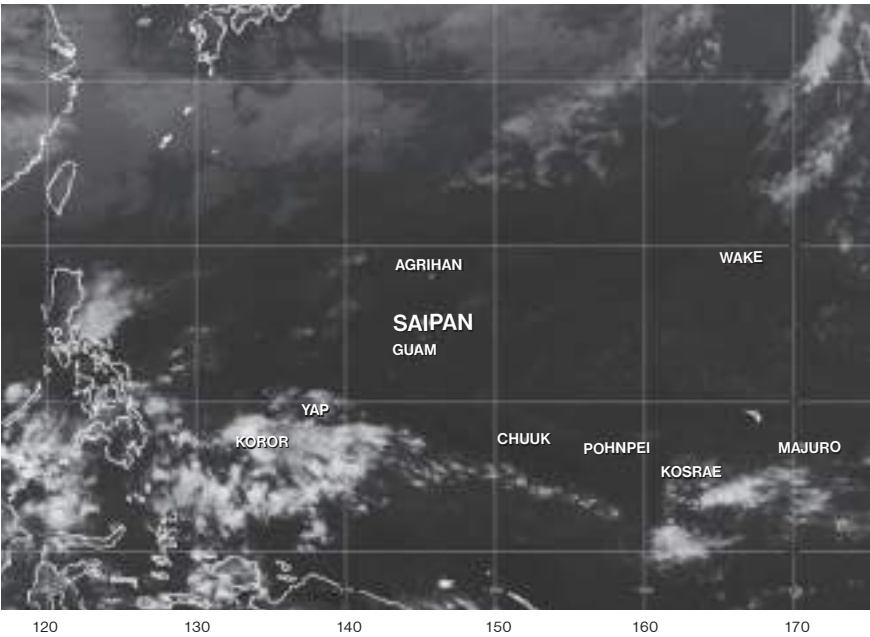
### Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲71 ▼61
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲49 ▼28
Hong Kong	Showers	▲61 ▼61
Honolulu	Showers	▲80 ▼70
London	Mostly Cloudy	▲61 ▼46
Los Angeles	Showers	▲55 ▼40
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲89 ▼78
Melbourne	Showers	▲68 ▼58
Miami	Thundershowers	▲81 ▼69
New York	Sunny	▲56 ▼34
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲48 ▼41
Paris	Showers	▲55 ▼43
Pusan	Cloudy	▲50 ▼41
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲60 ▼43
Salem	Sunny	▲49 ▼31
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲53 ▼41
Seoul	Cloudy	▲47 ▼28
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲45 ▼38
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲64 ▼38

### Tides

Saipan Harbor			
5:19 AM	Today	High Tide:	0.9 Feet
11:00 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.7 Feet
6:19 PM	Today	High Tide:	0.3 Feet

### Yesterday's Satellite Image



**PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2012**  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A trade-wind trough extends northeastward from 1N132E to 7N142E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring near Koror and south of Yap up to 300 miles northwest of the trough. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers over the Marshall Islands south of Majuro and near Kosrae south of a line from 2N160E to 6N163E to 7N173E to 4N177E. Low-level convergence is generating a few thunderstorms in two locations near Wake Island. The first is north of the island north of a line from 23N166E to 23N170 while the second is to the east between 18N and 21N from 172E to 178E.

### Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Wednesday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Thursday	6:34 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:34 AM	6:25 PM
Saturday	6:33 AM	6:25 PM

### Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:22 AM	11:30 PM
Wednesday	11:06 AM	
Thursday	11:53 AM	12:20 AM
Friday	12:44 PM	1:10 AM
Saturday	1:36 PM	2:00 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS  
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS  
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS  
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI  
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE  
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN  
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

#### REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
  - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
  - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
  - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
  - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
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**SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
<b>GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)</b> C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	<b>ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)</b> C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
<b>SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)</b> C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	<b>ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)</b> C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
<b>SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)</b> C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	<b>GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN</b> C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
<b>SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)</b> DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily	<b>NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN</b> DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily DL286 7:40pm 12:20am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
<b>SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)</b> OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	<b>OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN</b> OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
<b>SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)</b> OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	<b>SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN</b> OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)</b> OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7 DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5	<b>BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN</b> OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6 DL580 10:10pm 2:55am+1 4, 7
<b>SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)</b> 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	<b>GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN</b> 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
<b>SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)</b> 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	<b>SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN</b> 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
<b>SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)</b> OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	<b>MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN</b> DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ704/603 11:40pm 2:20pm Daily via ICN C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
<b>SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)</b> OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN	<b>HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN</b> OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	<b>Tinian-Saipan</b>			
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
<b>Saipan-Tinian</b>				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



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- \*11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.com](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.com)

# Business

## G-20 linking IMF hike to bigger EU 'firewall' fund

**MEXICO CITY (AP)**—The G-20 nations are conditioning additional money for the International Monetary Fund on the European Union first increasing its financial stabilization funds to ease concerns about the euro zone debt crisis, officials said Sunday.

Officials participating in a meeting of G-20 nations' finance ministers and central bank heads said an EU decision to add to the estimated euro500 billion (\$675 million) in firewall funds already committed to the effort would be essential before the rest of world considers contributing to the stabilization measures.

"There is broad agreement that the IMF cannot substitute for the absence of a stronger European firewall and that the IMF cannot move forward without more clarity on Europe's own plans," U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said following the close of the meeting, noting the U.S. would not be making any increased contribution.

The weekend talks mainly focused on stability for the euro zone, where debt and economic problems have threatened to destabilize global financial markets.

Though no specific amount in firewall funds was discussed, Geithner said the funds "have to be large ... my sense is that they (Europeans) understand that." Other officials said the added funds must be enough to calm market concerns and should be available to countries before they fully carry out promised fiscal reforms.

While the United States, Brazil and the Organization for Eco-



Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund Christine Lagarde delivers a speech during a conference at a so-called Group of 20 meeting in Mexico City, Sunday Feb. 26, 2012.

nomie Cooperation and Development had already publicly urged an increase, a senior G-20 official who spoke on condition she not be quoted by name said the consensus that the EU must act was much broader, including big potential lender countries like China and Japan. They feel the IMF can play a back-up role, but the EU's own fund must be the first line of defense, the official said.

It appears Germany's reluctance to further fund EU stabilization funds may be the sticking point, largely because the issue

is a sensitive one in German domestic politics. Germany is the EU's strongest economy and would probably be the biggest contributor, and the German parliament must still approve the current round of support efforts for debt-plagued Greece.

At a news conference, Mexican Treasury Secretary Jose Antonio Meade noted the euro-zone countries are to assess their stabilization efforts at a March meeting and said the results of that assessment, and possible changes in the size of the firewall funds,

would "be fundamental" to how G-20 nations decide on increasing funding for the IMF.

Mexico's central bank head, Agustín Carstens, said the EU decision would be an "essential input" for IMF funding decisions.

Geithner noted that "the G-20 is committed to making sure that the IMF has the resources it needs to help its members deal with the risks from Europe."

He also called the appreciation of China's currency, the renminbi, "welcome progress." China's currency has risen about

12 percent in real terms against the U.S. dollar over the last 18 months. But Geithner said that "we believe it is in China's interest and in the interest of the global economy for their exchange rate to continue to appreciate."

Geithner also said he had "a series of encouraging conversations with countries planning to significantly reduce imports from Iran," to reinforce sanctions aimed at discouraging Iran's nuclear program.

"We are seeing very effective cooperation from our partners

on the financial front to help ensure that their banks cease transactions with the Central Bank of Iran and that Iranian banks find it harder than ever to facilitate Iran's illicit nuclear activities or to help Iran evade sanctions," he said at a new conference.

Turning to the U.S. economy, Geithner said, "this is an important year for financial reform in the United States, where we expect to have the major foundations of our reform in place by the end of 2012."

While noting that the U.S. has made progress in some sectors on economic recovery, "even with this progress, however, the damage inflicted by the crisis will still take some time to repair. Unemployment, while falling, is still very high. And the housing market remains weak."

German officials did not speak to the media following the conference but appear reluctant to increase stabilization funds.

In a column in the Mexican newspaper *El Universal* on the eve of the meeting, German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble wrote that "should we increase even more the firewalls? The response is a resounding no." Schäuble also rejected sharing other euro-zone country debts or expanding the euro money supply to meet countries' budget gaps.

"This would not only not solve the problems of debt and competitiveness that brought the affected countries to their current state of affairs, it would also discourage their governments from carrying out consolidation and reform," he wrote.

### **BUSINESS BRIEFS**

#### **National gas prices up 18 cents in past 2 weeks**

**CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)**—The average U.S. price of a gallon of gasoline has jumped 18 cents over the past two weeks. That's according to the Lundberg Survey of fuel prices, released Sunday, which puts the price of a gallon of regular at \$3.69. Midgrade costs an average of \$3.83 a gallon, and premium is at \$3.95. Of the cities surveyed, Denver has the nation's lowest average price for gas at \$3.07. San Diego has the highest at \$4.24.

#### **Think tank: Sales-growth for arms vendors slows**

**STOCKHOLM (AP)**—A peace research group says the sales growth for the world's 100 largest arms producers slowed down to 1 percent in 2010 as foreign forces were withdrawing from Iraq. Comparable arms sales rose by 4 percent in 2009 and more than 10 percent the year before that. The Stockholm International

Peace Research Institute's annual statistics on the arms industry were released Monday. They showed U.S.-based Lockheed Martin remained the biggest arms vendor in 2010, with sales of \$35.73 billion, ahead of Britain's BAE Systems and Boeing.

#### **Gulf oil spill trial delayed for settlement talks**

**NEW ORLEANS (AP)**—A judge has delayed the federal trial over the nation's worst offshore oil disaster by a week, saying Sunday that BP PLC was making some progress in settlement talks with a committee overseeing scores of lawsuits, according to people close to the case. Two people close to the case told The Associated Press that the decision was made Sunday during a conference call between parties in the Gulf of Mexico oil spill case and U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the call.

## World Bank says China needs sweeping reforms

**BEIJING (AP)**—China needs to reduce the dominant role of state companies in its economy and promote free markets to keep growth steady and avoid potential crises, the World Bank and Chinese researchers said Monday.

The recommendations, in a report on China's development through to 2030, come amid a debate in the ruling inner circle over the future course of economic reform as a new generation of leaders prepares to take office this year.

The emphasis on curbing state industry clashes with Beijing's strategy over the past decade of building government-owned

champions in fields from banking to technology and is likely to provoke opposition.

"As China's leaders know, the country's current economic growth model is unsustainable," said World Bank president Robert Zoellick at a conference about the report. He said China has reached a "turning point" and needs to "redefine the role of the state."

The full report was due to be released later Monday.

Its recommendations highlight the fact that after three decades of reforms that allowed Chinese entrepreneurs to become world leaders in export-driven manufacturing, state

companies still control domestic industries from steel to airlines to oil to telecommunications.

Government companies are supported by low-cost credit from government banks and business groups complain regulators shield them from foreign and private competitors despite Beijing's market-opening pledges.

China's leaders have promised repeatedly to support entrepreneurs who create most of its new jobs and wealth. But most bank lending still goes to state companies and Beijing's huge stimulus in response to the 2008 crisis set back reforms by pouring money into government

industry while thousands of private companies went bankrupt.

A summary of the report released by the World Bank recommended an array of politically thorny changes, including forcing state companies to compete with private rivals, basing bank lending on market forces and changing a household registration system that limits the ability of rural migrants to work in cities.

Zoellick acknowledged they might face opposition from political factions that benefit from the old system. He said Beijing should make changes gradually to build support from new groups that profit from more open markets.

## Rule could cost child support debtors only income

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—Thousands of poor and disabled men stand to lose their only income next year because of a change in government policy that will allow states to seize every dollar of federal benefits from people who owe back child support.

Previously, states could capture only 65 percent of benefits from people who opted to be paid by paper check. Advocates estimate

that 275,000 men could be left destitute as a result of the change.

The concern is an unintended consequence of the Treasury Department's decision to pay all benefits electronically, including Social Security, disability and veterans' benefits, starting next year.

A separate Treasury Department rule, in place since last May in a preliminary form,

guarantees states the power to freeze the bank accounts of people who collect federal benefits and owe child support.

By allowing seizure of the remaining 35 percent of benefits, the rules could cause thousands of poor men to lose their only income.

"It's kind of Orwellian, what's being set up here for a segment of the population," says Johnson

Tyler, an attorney who represents poor and disabled people collecting federal benefits. "It's going to be a nightmare in about a year unless something changes."

In many cases, the bills are decades old and the children long grown. Much of the money owed is interest and fees that add up when men are unable to pay because they are disabled, institutionalized or imprisoned.

# Nation

## Santorum: Romney isn't conservative enough for GOP

**MARQUETTE, Mich. (AP)**—The question of whether Mitt Romney is conservative enough to deserve the Republican presidential nomination regained center stage in the GOP contest Sunday, with Rick Santorum saying the former Massachusetts governor fails the test.

Santorum urged Michigan voters to turn the race “on its ear” by rejecting Romney in Tuesday’s primary in his native state, in which Romney is spending heavily to avoid an upset. Santorum said Romney’s record is virtually identical to President Barack Obama’s on some key issues, especially mandated health coverage, making him a weak potential nominee.

“Why would we give away

the most salient issue in this election?” an impassioned Santorum asked more than 100 people in a remote, snow-covered region of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Santorum, a former senator from Pennsylvania, said he is the true conservative on fiscal and social issues.

Romney rejected the claims.

“The biggest misconception would be that I’m a guy that comes from Massachusetts and therefore I can’t be conservative,” Romney told “Fox News Sunday.” In his one term as Massachusetts governor, he said, he balanced budgets, reduced taxes, enforced immigration laws, “stood up for traditional marriage” and was “a pro-life governor.”

“I’m a solid conservative,” Romney said.

The exchanges highlighted the choice facing Republican voters in Arizona and Michigan on Tuesday, and another 10 states a week after that.

Campaigning later in Traverse City, Romney emphasized his Michigan roots and made clear to the crowd just how important a victory is in the state, where he was born and raised. “On Tuesday, I need a big voice coming from right here,” he said.

Romney did pick up the endorsement of Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer on Sunday.

He also took a detour to the Daytona 500 in Florida, where he talked with fans. Asked by The Associated Press if he fol-

lows the sport, Romney said, “Not as closely as some of the most ardent fans, but I have some great friends that are NASCAR team owners.”

Romney said he toured a garage with Richard Childress, who was a championship driver in the 1980s and now owns his own team.

Conservative activists dominate the GOP primaries. But party regulars fear too much focus on the Republican right will leave the eventual nominee poorly positioned to confront Obama in November, when independent voters will be crucial.

Santorum, a hero to anti-abortion and home-schooling advocates, disputes that argument. The way to beat Obama, he said Sunday, is with an unvarnished conservative whose views dramatically clash with the president’s on the economy, church and state, energy, foreign policy and other issues.

He said the party needs

### Michigan

ELECTION  
2012



Population	9.9 million
Pop. % chg. '00-'10	-0.6%
Percentage, U.S. pop.	3.2%
White	78.9%
Black	14.2%
Hispanic	4.4%
Asian	2.4%
Foreign born	5.9%
Household income*	\$48,432
Poverty rate	14.8%
Home ownership	74.2%

© 2012 MCT \*Median, 2006-10  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

“someone who can paint a very different vision of the country.”

Romney and Santorum hit Obama on many issues, including the president’s apology for the actions of U.S. troops who

burned Qurans—inadvertently, they said—while destroying documents on a military base in Afghanistan.

Romney said that for many Americans, the apology “sticks in their throat.”

“We’ve made an enormous contribution to help the people there achieve freedom,” he said. “And for us to be apologizing at a time like this is something which is very difficult for the American people to countenance.”

As for U.S. troops in Afghanistan, Romney said Obama “made an enormous error by announcing the withdrawal date of our surge forces during the fighting season.”

Santorum portrayed Obama’s apology for the burned Qurans as further proof that the president is trying to appease “forces of evil” bent on America’s destruction. To apologize rather than simply note a mistake was made, he said, “not only encourages them, but I believe, incites them.”

## WWII vet says nobody helped after he was carjacked



Aaron Brantley, 86, of Detroit talks about being carjacked at a gas station in his home, Friday, February 24, 2012 in Detroit. Brantley, a World War II veteran says nobody helped him after he was attacked and carjacked in daylight at a Detroit gas station.

**DETROIT (AP)**—A World War II veteran said nobody helped him in the minutes after he was attacked and carjacked during daylight at a busy Detroit gas station and he had to crawl across a concrete parking lot to get help.

A roughly four-minute surveillance video shows 86-year-old Aaron Brantley struggling to get from the fuel pump to the gas station’s door as people walked and drove by him Wednesday morning. The video was first obtained by the Detroit Free Press.

Brantley told The Associated Press said several people passed by him as he crawled, unable to walk because his leg was broken in the attack. The carjacker knocked Brantley down, took his keys and drove off in his car about 10:40 a.m.

“I was trying to go in ... and see if somebody could call the police and an ambulance because I couldn’t stand. I had to crawl—I tried two or three times to get up,” Brantley said Saturday. He said he was on

way home from Bible study when he stopped to put gas in his 2010 Chrysler 200, which he recently bought to replace another car that had been stolen.

“People were passing me just like I wasn’t there. ... I was crawling and they just walk by me like I’m not there,” he said.

Brantley said as he approached the building, he asked a woman to open the door for him. He said at first it appeared she wasn’t going to but she did and then kept walking. He found it distressing that nobody helped him.

“Any time a person is crawling on the ground, you know something happened to them,” Brantley said.

Station manager Haissam Jaber said he didn’t see the attack but called 911 after a customer alerted him. As Brantley sat on rock salt, waiting for an ambulance to come, he offered money to a stranger to drive him to his house a few blocks away. The customer refused the money and drove Brantley home,

where an ambulance took him to the hospital.

Jaber said he also gave police another surveillance video from just before the carjacking that shows Brantley coming in to pay the cashier. A man looked at Brantley and left without buying anything, then headed in the direction from which the carjacker approached Brantley and his car, Jaber said.

Jaber said violent crime isn’t common at the gas station, which is next to the University of Detroit Mercy campus. He said there was a carjacking about four months ago, but it happened at 1 a.m. and nobody was attacked.

Detroit Police spokeswoman Sgt. Eren Stephens said Saturday there have been no arrests in the case. The Free Press reported that a man later found Brantley’s phone number in his Bible on the stolen car’s front seat and called him. The car had been abandoned hours later and a few miles away with its wheels and radio missing.

## Girl, 11, fights classmate, dies hours later

**LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP)**—After getting her nose bloodied in a fight with another girl near their Southern California elementary school, 11-year-old Joanna Ramos told her mother on the way home she felt sick. Hours later, she was dead.

“My daughter started complaining, saying she doesn’t feel good, let’s go home, so we went to home and I changed her clothes, and she go to sleep, that’s the only thing that I know,” Joanna’s mother, Cecilia Villanueva told KNBC-TV. “We took her to the hospital but it was too late. She was in a coma.”

Ramos died at a Long Beach hospital at 9 p.m. Friday, about six hours after the fight in an alley, police said Saturday. Authorities have not released the girl’s name but Villanueva told KNBC the girl who died was her daughter, Joanna.

“I want to know what hap-

pened,” she said through tears.

Police spokeswoman Nancy Pratt stressed the unusual nature of the tragedy, urging caution about linking the fight to the girl’s death until a coroner’s report is released. Police, who have interviewed the other girl involved in the fight, were investigating and said that no arrests are immediately planned.

“I think it’s safe to say this is definitely an isolated incident,” Pratt said. “I personally don’t hear of 11-year-old fights like this especially girls. I can’t say they never happen but I think everyone was completely caught off-guard by this event.”

The after school fight near Willard Elementary didn’t appear to be especially serious or violent, no weapons were used and neither girl was knocked to the ground, police said. Police could not say what prompted the fight but friends

had their suspicions.

“They were fighting over a boy,” said Stephanie Guadalupe, a friend of Joanna. “I told the teacher and she said she would talk to all the girls on Monday.”

The Long Beach Press Telegram reported the fight was pre-planned. Long Beach Unified School District Superintendent Chris Steinhauer told the newspaper there was no indication that adults at the school, attended by about 800 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, were aware of the fight or notified about beforehand.

The students involved in the altercation left an after-school program and went to an alley near the school to fight. Some students said bullying had been a problem at the school but Deputy Chief Robert Luna could not confirm if this was an issue in this incident.

## NYPD monitoring of Muslims enters mayoral race

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Potential candidates for Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s office are taking stands on the New York Police Department’s surveillance of Muslim students, ranging from cautious support to a warning about curtailing civil liberties.

Bloomberg, who leaves office after the 2013 election, has said that he finds “worrisome” the idea that his successor might abandon NYPD policies that have kept New Yorkers safe.

The NYPD used undercover officers and informants to infiltrate Muslim student groups at a dozen colleges in New York City, upstate New York, Connecticut, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, documents obtained by The Associated Press show. The

monitoring was part of the department’s anti-terrorism efforts.

But Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer said in a statement to the AP over the weekend that “it is troubling when people are subject to surveillance and investigation simply because they are members of a particular group.”

However, the Democrat, a declared candidate for mayor, praised the city’s police department for doing an “extraordinary job protecting our city,” as long as authorities make sure anti-terrorism efforts “do not trample on the civil liberties that all citizens have a right to enjoy.”

Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said Friday that his department is “continuing to do

what we believe necessary to protect the city, pursuant to the law.” He did not elaborate.

NYC Comptroller John C. Liu, who is expected to run for mayor, praised “the dedicated men and women of the NYPD” for doing “an extraordinary job of keeping New Yorkers safe.” But in a statement, he also warned that “we should not as a matter of policy profile people based on religion or race—it goes against everything this city stands for.”

Liu, a Queens Democrat, faces a federal investigation into his fundraising operation after reports of inconsistencies in his campaign finances.

When asked about the NYPD surveillance, media executive Tom Allon didn’t hedge.

# Asia

## Nepalese man, 72, declared shortest person ever

**KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)**—A 72-year-old Nepalese man who is about the size of a toddler on Sunday became the world's shortest person ever recorded.

A doctor and Guinness World Records official measured Chandra Bahadur Dangi to confirm his height of 21.5 inches (54.6 centimeters).

Guinness official Craig Glanday presented Dangi with two certificates for being the world's shortest living man and the world's shortest person recorded in Guinness' 57-year history.

"I am very happy. Now I want to travel across Nepal and to foreign countries," Dangi told reporters afterward.

He said he has no desire to get married or have a family of his own, but would like to meet the prime minister of Nepal soon.

Dangi lives in a remote mountain village, Rhimkholi, about 250 miles (400 kilometers) west of Katmandu, with his youngest brother and his family. His five brothers are all average height.

Before being measured in the capital, Katmandu, on Saturday,



Editor in Chief of Guinness World Records Craig Glanday, right, and Dr. Kashila Pradhan, left, officially measure Nepal's Chandra Bahadur Dangi, 72, who says he's only 22 inches (56 centimeters) tall, at the CIWEC clinic in Katmandu, Nepal, Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012.

he had never seen a doctor and his relatives say he has never been seriously ill or had any injuries. The doctors who saw him at the clinic also found no

immediate health problems. His family is not sure when he stopped growing.

Because of his height, he has never worked outside the house,

doing only household chores.

He has a normal sized head and regularly shaves, but his body is small. He is able to walk and climb small stairs. He eats mainly

rice and vegetables, and occasionally meat, but in small portions.

Dangi takes the shortest man record from Junrey Balawing of the Philippines, who is 23.5 inches (60 centimeters) tall. He also beat the record of Gul Mohammed of India as the shortest adult human to have their height verified by Guinness. Mohammed, who died in 1997, was 22.5 inches (57 centimeters) tall.

Since Dangi's village is so remote, it was only recently that Dangi gained notice. A forest contractor cutting timber in the village met him and told local media.

Another Nepalese man, Khagendra Thapa Magar, was declared the world's shortest man at 26.4 inches (67 centimeters) before Balawing took over the title in June on his 18th birthday.

In December, Guinness recognized an Indian teenager as the world's shortest woman. Jyoti Amge is 24.7 inches (62.8 centimeters) tall and wants to attend university and become a Bollywood star.

Aside from a Guinness certificate, the titles don't come with any cash award.

## Pakistan razes bin Laden's home, erasing memories

**ABBOTTABAD, Pakistan (AP)**—Pakistan pushed ahead Sunday with its surprise demolition of the compound where U.S. commandos killed Osama bin Laden last year, likely an attempt to erase the symbol of the colossal security failure that humiliated the nation and severely damaged ties with Washington.

Islamabad was outraged by the covert American raid in the northwestern town of Abbottabad because it was not told about it beforehand—a decision the U.S. explained by concerns that someone in the Pakistani government might tip off the al-Qaida chief.

The operation left Pakistan's powerful army in the awkward position of explaining how it was unable to stop U.S. troops

from attacking a compound deep inside Pakistan and located next to the country's military academy. Citizens also demanded to know how bin Laden was able to live in Abbottabad for six years without the government's knowledge, a question that remains unanswered.

The raid drove the crucial anti-terror alliance between the U.S. and Pakistan close to the breaking point, and in many ways it has never recovered. The relationship is critical to U.S. efforts to wind down the decade-long war in neighboring Afghanistan.

Heavy machines began tearing down bin Laden's three-story compound Saturday night under heavy security without the government providing ad-

vance notice. By Sunday evening, workers had destroyed around three-quarters of the large concrete compound and its tall boundary walls. They were clearing debris in large trucks so they could finish the job, according to an Associated Press reporter who managed to get close to the site.

Large numbers of police still surrounded the compound Sunday to keep spectators and journalists away, but the army soldiers present the previous night had departed.

Local residents expressed mixed feelings about the demolition, with some applauding the move and others saying the government should have put the building to public use.

Shabbir Ahmed, a 22-year-old college student in Abbottabad, said the presence of the compound sparked bad memories and made the lives of local residents more difficult.

"We were searched and questioned every time we wanted to reach our homes," Ahmed told The Associated Press. "When this symbol of evil is finally gone, people in the area will be able to rest."

But Mohammad Sarwar, a retired 60-year-old businessman, said razing the compound didn't make sense and was a waste of money.

"I don't know what benefit the government will get by its demolition instead of using it for some official or public purpose, like

establishing a school, library or laboratory," said Sarwar.

The former trader said he suspected the government's decision was driven by U.S. pressure—a common sentiment in a country where anti-American attitudes are rampant and conspiracy theories flourish.

Some Abbottabad residents said in the wake of the raid that the compound should be turned into a tourist attraction to help the town earn money. There was always the danger, however, that it could also draw al-Qaida supporters.

American officials said they buried bin Laden's body at sea to avoid giving his followers a burial place that could become a makeshift shrine.

## Afghan protesters hurl grenades at US base

**KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)**—Demonstrators hurled grenades at a U.S. base in northern Afghanistan, and a gun battle left two Afghans dead and seven NATO troops injured Sunday in the escalating crisis over the burning of Muslim holy books at an American airfield.

More than 30 people have been killed, including four U.S. troops, in six days of unrest. Still, the top U.S. diplomat in Afghanistan said the violence would not change Washington's course.

"Tensions are running very high here, and I think we need to let things calm down, return to a more normal atmosphere, and then get on with business," Ambassador Ryan Crocker told CNN's "State of the Union." "This is not the time to decide

that we're done here," he said. "We have got to redouble our efforts. We've got to create a situation in which al-Qaida is not coming back."

The attack on the base came a day after two U.S. military advisers—a lieutenant colonel and a major—were found dead after being shot in the head in their office at the Interior Ministry in the heart of the capital. The building is one of the city's most heavily guarded buildings, and the slayings raised doubts about safety as coalition troops continue their withdrawal.

The incident prompted NATO, Britain and France to recall hundreds of international advisers from all Afghan ministries in the capital. The advisers are key to helping improve

governance and preparing the country's security forces to take on more responsibility.

A manhunt was under way for the main suspect in the shooting—an Afghan man who worked as a driver for an office on the same floor as the advisers who were killed, Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqi said. He did not provide further details about the suspect or his possible motive.

The Taliban claimed that the shooter was one of their sympathizers and that an accomplice had helped him get into the compound to kill the Americans in retaliation for the Quran burnings.

Afghanistan's defense and interior ministers were to visit Washington this week, but they called off the trip to consult with other

Afghan officials and religious leaders on how to stop the violence, Pentagon press secretary George Little said. The Afghan officials had planned to meet with Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey.

The protesters in Kunduz province in the north threw hand grenades to express their anger at the way some Qurans and other Islamic texts were disposed of in a burn pit last week at Bagram Air Field, north of Kabul.

President Barack Obama and other U.S. officials have apologized for the burnings, which they said were a mistake. But their apologies have not quelled the anger of Afghans, who say the incident illustrates foreigners' disrespect for their culture

and religion.

Last week, during a protest in Nangarhar province in the east, two other U.S. troops were killed when an Afghan soldier turned his gun on them.

In Sunday's protest in Kunduz, thousands of protesters tried to enter the district's largest city. Armed individuals in the crowd fired on police and threw grenades at the U.S. base on the city outskirts, said Amanuddin Quriashi, administrator in Imam Sahib.

Seven NATO troops were wounded by the grenade. One protester was killed by troops firing from the U.S. base, and another was killed by Afghan police, Quriashi said.

A NATO spokesman said an explosion occurred outside the base, but that the grenades did not breach its defenses.

### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### Car bomb hits airport in eastern Afghanistan

**KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)**—A car bomb exploded early Monday at the gates of Jalalabad airport in eastern Afghanistan, officials said. The number of casualties was not immediately known. Nangahar provincial spokesman Ahmadzia Abdulzai said he did not yet know how many were dead or injured, but there were casualties. While the blast came from explosives in a vehicle, Abdulzai also said it was not yet clear if it was a parked car that was detonated remotely or a vehicle driven by a suicide bomber into the entrance of the airport. The blast was "very strong," said provincial police spokesman Hazrad Mohammad. He did not have further details.

#### 2 rebels, 2 children killed in Philippine clash

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—Philippine army troops clashed with communist guerrillas in a fierce gunbattle that killed two rebels and two children who were with the insurgents in a northwestern province, officials said Sunday. Regional military commander Maj. Gen. Josue Gaverza Jr. said he had ordered an investigation to determine if the soldiers committed lapses that led to the deaths of the two boys, aged 7 and 10, and the wounding of their sister during Saturday's clash in a remote village in Camarines Norte province. The three, who were believed to be children of one of the slain rebels, were hit in the crossfire, Gaverza said.

#### Aussie PM defeats predecessor, hangs on to job

**CANBERRA, Australia (AP)**—Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard easily won an internal party vote Monday against the colleague she deposed two years ago, Kevin Rudd, and declared that she had put down the internal strife that has undermined her unpopular government for months. Gillard defeated Rudd 71 votes to 31 in a ballot of Labor Party lawmakers, but she faces the challenge of reuniting her bitterly divided party and Cabinet. Rudd resigned as foreign minister shortly before she called the vote last week, and at least five other members of Gillard's Cabinet backed her challenger. Gillard described her win as "overwhelming" after months of "ugly" infighting within the ranks of the center-left party.

## World

## West dismisses Syria constitution vote as a 'farce'

**DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)**—The U.S. and its allies dismissed the Syrian regime's referendum on a new constitution Sunday as a "farce" meant to justify the bloody crackdown on dissent.

But voters in government strongholds suggested why some Syrians have not joined the uprising against President Bashar Assad: Loyalty, distrust of the opposition and fear his fall will ignite a civil war.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called the poll "a cynical ploy" and urged Syrians who still support Assad to turn against him. A "farce" and a "sham vote" was how German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle described it.

"It's a phony referendum and it is going to be used by Assad to justify what he's doing to other Syrian citizens," Clinton said in an interview with CBS News in Rabat, Morocco.

"The longer you support the regime's campaign of violence against your brothers and sisters, the more it will stain your honor," she added, addressing Assad supporters, especially the military. "If you refuse, however, to prop up the regime or take part in attacks ... your countrymen and women will hail you as heroes."

While casting his vote at the state broadcasting headquarters, Assad showed no signs of giving in on international demands to end his crackdown. And as he has done in the past, he tried to deflect blame in other direc-



In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, Syrian President Bashar Assad casts his ballot next to his wife Asma at a polling station during a referendum on the new constitution, in Damascus, Syria, on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012.

tions. He said Syria was under a "media attack."

"They may be stronger on the airwaves but we are stronger on the ground, and we aspire to win both on the ground and on the airwaves," he said in footage broadcast on state TV.

The U.S. and its European and Arab allies met Friday at a major international conference on the Syrian crisis in Tunisia, trying to forge a unified strategy to push Assad from power. They began planning a civilian peacekeeping mission to deploy after the regime falls.

The new constitution allows—at least in theory—for the formation of competing political parties and limits the president to two seven-year terms. Such change was unthinkable a year ago. Syria has been ruled by the Baath party since it seized power in a coup in 1963 and the Assad family has ruled since Bashar's father Hafez took over in another coup in 1970.

Even as the regime hailed the referendum as a giant step toward reform, its military kept up a crackdown that has been focused for the past three weeks

on the opposition stronghold city of Homs. The city, parts of which are controlled by rebels, has come under intense shelling and hundreds have died, including two Western journalists.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 36 civilians and 23 security personnel were killed Sunday, mostly in Homs. Another group, the Local Coordination Committees, said 55 people were killed nationwide, including 23 in Homs province.

The opposition called the referendum an empty gesture and

boycotted voting, saying it will not ease the country's crisis. Supporters of the uprising say nothing short of Assad's ouster will end the bloodshed.

Activist groups estimate nearly 7,500 have died in 11 months of unrest.

Still the referendum demonstrated the support that Assad continues to enjoy among many Syrians and pointed to the difficulties of regime opponents—both internal and external—will face in trying to push him from power.

For the 41 years Assad's family has ruled Syria, it has used shrewd politics, a nearly omnipresent intelligence service and brute force to maintain power. Many of Syria's minorities—Christians, Druse and Alawites, which include Assad—count on the regime for protection on the understanding that they remain loyal. Many others have also benefited from regime ties.

These groups could be loath to see the regime fall, especially given how disorganized and unfamiliar those fighting Assad are. Regular state propaganda characterizing them and Islamist extremists and "armed gangs" also plays a role.

Even a successful vote—results are expected Monday—is unlikely to bring immediate change. Activists say too many people have died for them to accept anything less than Assad's ouster.

## Relatives of Titanic officer seek return of letter

**LONDON (AP)**—The descendants of a surgeon who died on the Titanic nearly 100 years ago are appealing for a benefactor to purchase a soon-to-be-auctioned letter he wrote from the doomed ship—and to return it to the city where the vessel was built.

A two-page note John Edward Simpson wrote to his mother days before the ship sank in April 1912 is to be expected to fetch at least \$50,000 at the auction later this week in Long Island, New York.

Simpson's great-nephew John Martin said Sunday that the family can't afford to buy it, but would love to see it back in Belfast.

"It would be great if a donor or benefactor could be found who would purchase and return it to Northern Ireland for public display," he said.

Simpson's letter, dated April 11, 1912, is written on notepaper headed RMS Titanic and is addressed to his mother, who was living in Belfast.

In the letter, Simpson, 37, said his cabin was larger than the accommodation on board the Titanic's sister ship the Olympic, where he had previously worked. He also complained that he had found one of his trunks unlocked and that some money had been stolen from his pocketbook.

The surgeon, who treated second- and third-class passengers, signed off: "With fondest love, John."

The letter was brought ashore at Cobh (now called Queenstown), Ireland—the Titanic's last port of call before the ship set sail for America. It was dispatched to Simpson's mother, Elizabeth, who lived on Belfast's Dublin Road.

Three days later, he died along with 1,500 others after the ship struck an iceberg.

Martin said his family had held onto the letter for generations, but that Simpson's 81-year-old daughter-in-law gave it to a Titanic enthusiast in Holland 15 years ago. The family lost track of the letter until learning it is to be auctioned by Philip Weiss Auctions.

Simpson's story will form part of a new Titanic Belfast visitor attraction opening in Belfast next month ahead of the 100th anniversary of the sinking.

Martin said the letter provided a rare insight into the life of one of the ship's officers.

"There are references within the letter which give a bit of humanity to the man who died, and he did die bravely," he said. "It puts a human face on what could be another statistic."

## Army IDs remains of last missing soldier in Iraq

**BAGHDAD (AP)**—The U.S. military announced Sunday that it has recovered the remains of the last American service member who was unaccounted for in Iraq, an Army interpreter seized by gunmen after sneaking off base to visit his Iraqi wife in Baghdad during the height of the insurgency.

The remains of Staff Sgt. Ahmed al-Taie, who was 41 when militiamen seized him on Oct. 23, 2006, were positively identified at the military's mortuary in Dover, Del., the Army said in a statement released Sunday. Army officials said they had no further

details about the circumstances surrounding his death or the discovery of his remains.

Al-Taie's brother, Hathal Al-Taie, told The Associated Press the military officer who visited the family's home to inform them about the remains said they are still in Dover, but that he didn't know the circumstances surrounding his brother's death.

"We have no information right now, not even how the body looks like or when they're going to release him," Hathal Al-Taie said by phone from Ann Arbor, Mich., where the family settled after leav-

ing Iraq for the U.S. when his brother was still a teenager.

Their uncle, Entifadh Qanbar, said he was told by the Army major who informed the family in Ann Arbor that the remains were received at Dover on Feb. 22.

"I asked if it was an accident or if he was killed, and he said they didn't know, that they are investigating," Qanbar said by phone from Beirut, where he lives. "He said he had the same questions that I have."

The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad did not respond to a request for comment late Sunday.

Family members say that like many Iraqi exiles, Ahmed

al-Taie was eager to help his native land rebuild after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion and ouster of Saddam Hussein.

He met his wife during a trip to Iraq shortly after Saddam fell, while he was still a civilian, and in December 2004 he joined an Army reserve program for native speakers of Arabic and other strategic languages. He was deployed to Iraq in November 2005 and was assigned to a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Baghdad until he was kidnapped the following year.

At the time he was seized, kidnappings for ransom or political motives, mostly of Iraqis but also

many foreigners, were common. The February 2006 bombing of a Shiite mosque by Sunni insurgents caused retaliatory bloodshed to spiral, and death squads roamed the streets.

Al-Taie's in-laws say he often met secretly with his wife at her family's home despite warnings that he was in danger of being kidnapped.

It was during one of those visits that al-Taie disappeared. Masked gunmen hiding in an abandoned Saddam-era army building seized him as he went to find his wife at her uncle's house, less than two blocks away in the Karradah.

ransom-kidnapping victims currently held by the rebels, whose number is not known. Nor is it clear, given the insurgency's decentralized nature, whether the FARC's ruling seven-man secretariat can enforce its order.

### Officials say 3 dead in Canadian train derailment

**BURLINGTON, Ontario (AP)**—A Canadian Via Rail passenger train derailed west of Toronto Sunday, killing three

railroad employees and injuring dozens of passengers, officials said. Via Rail spokeswoman Michelle Lamarche said the three people killed were all railroad employees who were riding in the locomotive at the front of the train when it derailed in Burlington, Ontario. Lamarche said no passengers died but dozens were injured. She said 75 people were on board the train traveling from Niagara Falls to Toronto when it derailed Sunday afternoon near Aldershot station.

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### Israeli PM slams Palestinian leader's speech

**JERUSALEM (AP)**—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for making an "inflammatory speech" about Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site on Sunday, saying his words undermine peace efforts. Speaking during a visit to Qatar, Abbas charged that Israel was intending to destroy

Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque, which sits atop the remains of the two biblical Jewish temples. It is the most sacred site in Judaism and the third holiest in Islam. The site is a very sensitive and emotional issue for Israelis and Palestinians.

#### Colombia's FARC announces halt to kidnapping

**BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)**—Colombia's main rebel group said Sunday it is abandoning

the practice of kidnapping and will soon free its last remaining "prisoners of war"—10 security force members held for as long as 14 years. The leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, announced on its website that it would no longer kidnap civilians "for financial ends," unequivocally renouncing for the first time a tool it long used against Colombia's well-heeled as well as foreigners. It is not clear whether an order has been given to release

# Focus

By **JOAN LOWY**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—Heads up: Drones are going mainstream. Civilian cousins of the unmanned military aircraft that have tracked and killed terrorists in the Middle East and Asia are in demand by police departments, border patrols, power companies, news organizations and others wanting a bird's-eye view that's too impractical or dangerous for conventional planes or helicopters to get.

Along with the enthusiasm, there are qualms.

Drones overhead could invade people's privacy. The government worries they could collide with passenger planes or come crashing down to the ground, concerns that have slowed more widespread adoption of the technology.

Despite that, pressure is building to give drones the same access as manned aircraft to the sky at home.

"It's going to be the next big revolution in aviation. It's coming," says Dan Elwell, the Aerospace Industries Association's vice president for civil aviation.

Some impetus comes from the military, which will bring home drones from Afghanistan and wants room to test and use them. In December, Congress gave the Federal Aviation Administration six months to pick half a dozen sites around the country where the military and others can fly unmanned aircraft in the vicinity of regular air traffic, with the aim of demonstrating they're safe.

The Defense Department says the demand for drones and their expanding missions requires routine and unfettered access to domestic airspace, including around airports and cities. In a report last October, the Pentagon called for flights first by small drones both solo and in groups, day and night, expanding over several years. Flights by large and medium-sized drones would follow in the latter half of this decade.

Other government agencies want to fly drones, too, but they've been hobbled by an FAA ban unless they first receive case-by-case permission. Fewer than 300 waivers were in use at the end of 2011, and they often include restrictions that severely limit the usefulness of the flights. Businesses that want to put drones to work are out of luck; waivers are only for government agencies.

But that's changing.

Congress has told the FAA that the agency must allow civilian and military drones to fly in civilian airspace by September 2015. This spring, the FAA is set to take a first step by proposing rules that would allow limited commercial use of small drones for the first time.

Until recently, agency officials were saying there were too many unresolved safety issues to give drones greater access. Even now FAA officials are cautious about describing their plans and they avoid discussion of deadlines.

"The thing we care about is doing that in an orderly and safe way and finding the appropriate ... balance of all the users in the system," Michael Huerta, FAA's acting administrator,



This Sept. 2011 photo provided by Vanguard Defense Industries, shows a ShadowHawk drone with Montgomery County, Texas, SWAT team members.

## Pressure builds for civilian drone flights at home

### ON THE NET

- Federal Aviation Administration: [www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov)
- Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International: [www.auvsi.org](http://www.auvsi.org)
- Aerospace Industries Association: [www.aia-aerospace.org/](http://www.aia-aerospace.org/)
- ACLU report: <http://tinyurl.com/77n9h7m>
- Electronic Frontier Foundation lawsuit: <http://tinyurl.com/7feyfv9>

told a recent industry luncheon in Washington. "Let's develop these six sites—and we will be doing that—where we can develop further data, further testing and more history on how these things actually operate."

Drones come in all sizes, from the high-flying Global Hawk with its 116-foot wingspan to a hummingbird-like drone that weighs less than an AA battery and can perch on a window ledge to record sound and video. Lockheed Martin has developed a fake maple leaf seed, or "whirly bird," equipped with imaging sensors, that weighs less than an ounce.

Potential civilian users are as varied as the drones themselves.

Power companies want them to monitor transmission lines. Farmers want to fly them over fields to detect which crops need water. Ranchers want them to count cows.

Journalists are exploring drones' newsgathering potential. The FAA is investigating whether The Daily, a digital publication of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., used drones without permission to capture aerial footage of floodwaters in North Dakota and Mississippi last year. At the University of Nebraska, journalism professor Matt Waite has started a lab for students to experiment with using a small, remote-controlled helicopter.

"Can you cover news with a drone? I think the answer is yes," Waite said.

The aerospace industry forecasts a worldwide deployment of almost 30,000 drones by 2018, with the United States accounting for half of them.

"The potential ... civil market for these systems could dwarf the military market in the coming years if we

can get access to the airspace," said Ben Gielow, government relations manager for the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, an industry trade group.

The hungriest market is the nation's 19,000 law enforcement agencies.

Customs and Border Patrol has nine Predator drones mostly in use on the U.S.-Mexico border, and plans to expand to 24 by 2016. Officials say the unmanned aircraft have helped in the seizure of more than 20 tons of illegal drugs and the arrest of 7,500 people since border patrols began six years ago.

Several police departments are experimenting with smaller drones to photograph crime scenes, aid searches and scan the ground ahead of SWAT teams. The Justice Department has four drones it loans to police agencies.

"We look at this as a low-cost alternative to buying a helicopter or fixed-wing plane," said Michael O'Shea, the department's aviation technology program manager. A small drone can cost less than \$50,000, about the price of a patrol car with standard police gear.

Like other agencies, police departments must get FAA waivers and follow much the same rules as model airplane hobbyists: Drones must weigh less than 55 pounds, stay be-

low an altitude of 400 feet, keep away from airports and always stay within sight of the operator. The restrictions are meant to prevent collisions with manned aircraft.

Even a small drone can be "a huge threat" to a larger plane, said Dale Wright, head of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association's safety and technology department. "If an airliner sucks it up in an engine, it's probably going to take the engine out," he said. "If it hits a small plane, it could bring it down."

Controllers want drone operators to be required to have instrument-rated pilot licenses—a step above a basic private pilot license. "We don't want the Microsoft pilot who has never really flown an airplane and doesn't know the rules of how to fly," Wright said.

Military drones designed for battlefields haven't had to meet the kind of rigorous safety standards required of commercial aircraft.

"If you are going to design these things to operate in the (civilian) airspace you need to start upping the ante," said Tom Haueter, director of the National Transportation Safety Board's aviation safety office. "It's one thing to operate down low. It's another thing to operate where other airplanes are, especially over populated areas."

Even with FAA restrictions, drones

are proving useful in the field.

Deputies with the Mesa County Sheriff's Office in Colorado can launch a 2-pound Draganflyer X6 helicopter from the back of a patrol car.

The drone's bird's-eye view cut the manpower needed for a search of a creek bed for a missing person from 10 people to two, said Ben Miller, who runs the drone program. The craft also enabled deputies to alert fire officials to a potential roof collapse in time for the evacuation of firefighters from the building, he said.

The drone could do more if it were not for the FAA's line-of-sight restriction, Miller said. "I don't think (the restriction) provides any extra safety," he said.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, north of Houston, used a Department of Homeland Security grant to buy a \$300,000, 50-pound ShadowHawk helicopter drone for its SWAT team. The drone has a high-powered video camera and an infrared camera that can spot a person's thermal image in the dark.

"Public-safety agencies are beginning to see this as an invaluable tool for them, just as the car was an improvement over the horse and the single-shot pistol was improved upon by the six-shooter," said Chief Deputy Randy McDaniel, who runs the Montgomery drone program.

The ShadowHawk can be equipped with a 40 mm grenade launcher and a 12-gauge shotgun, according to its maker, Vanguard Defense Industries of Conroe, Texas. The company doesn't sell the armed version in the United States, although "we have had interest from law-enforcement entities for deployment of nonlethal munitions from the aircraft," Vanguard CEO Michael Buscher said.

The possibility of armed police drones someday patrolling the sky disturbs Terri Burke, executive director of the Texas chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

"The Constitution is taking a back seat so that boys can play with their toys," Burke said. "It's kind of scary that they can use a laptop computer to zap people from the air."

A recent ACLU report said allowing drones greater access takes the country "a large step closer to a surveillance society in which our every move is monitored, tracked, recorded, and scrutinized by the authorities."

The Electronic Frontier Foundation, which focuses on civil liberties threats involving new technologies, sued the FAA recently, seeking disclosure of which agencies have been given permission to use drones. FAA officials declined to answer questions from The Associated Press about the lawsuit.

Industry officials said privacy concerns are overblown.

"Today anybody—the paparazzi, anybody—can hire a helicopter or a (small plane) to circle around something that they're interested in and shoot away with high-powered cameras all they want," said Elwell, the aerospace industry spokesman. "I don't understand all the comments about the Big Brother thing."

*AP Television producer Thomas Ritchie contributed to this report.*

## Overdrive

## Mercedes-Benz SLK adds some growl

By TERRY BOX  
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Silver SLKs routinely glide down sun-kissed streets in ritzy cities—sports cars for life's long straights.

Every now and then, the smallish two-seater from Mercedes-Benz might break a sweat to conquer a curve or two.

Most of the time, though, the cute-cruiser SLK places style above sinew—it's a prancer, not a kicker. For all I know, SLK may be short for slick.

But I guess the stiff-collared Germans who build Slick finally got tired of rambunctious Boxsters and BMW Z4s roughing up their little roadster.

When the 2012 version of the SLK arrived recently at The Daily Planet, it wore red—and wore it well, I thought.

This year, Mercedes dropped in a juicier 3.5-liter V-6 with 302 horsepower, up substantially from last year's 268. Moreover, while it can't quite dance with stars like the Boxster and Z4, the SLK has the moves now to twirl them around a bit.

As a result, for those of you thinking about downsizing, the SLK, at a pricey \$65,245 for the test vehicle, is almost as entertaining as Mercedes' larger SL roadster, which costs twice as much.

I've never quite figured out Mercedes-Benz's exaggerated styling, by the way, which seems at odds with the conservative nature of the company.

But the SLK has nice proportions and lines for the most part.

The heavy-handed front end may trip you up some. Blunt and busy, with a large Benz star in the

center of the grille, it's kind of the equivalent of a tight black shirt emblazoned with "No Fear."

It's a bit much, if you know what I mean. But it flowed into a classic-looking long hood with functional vents at its base.

Muscular fenders housed good-looking 18-inch AMG alloy wheels, fitted with 225/40 tires in front and 245-35s in the rear.

A relatively short trunk contributed to the Old World proportions, which were helped further by a taut metal retractable top.

In the rear, you find familiar wrap-around Benz taillamps and large oval exhausts that finally have something to talk about.

Pushed hard by segment-leading Audi, Mercedes-Benz is also

## NUTS &amp; BOLTS

**Type of vehicle:** Rear-wheel-drive, two-passenger convertible  
**Base price, excluding destination charge:** \$54,800  
**Price as tested:** \$65,245  
**Fuel economy:** 20 mpg city, 29 highway  
**Weight:** 3,406 pounds  
**Engine:** 3.5-liter V-6 with 302 horsepower and 273 pound-feet of torque  
**Transmission:** Seven-speed automatic  
**Performance:** 0 to 60 mph in 5.1 seconds  
**Safety rating:** Unrated  
**SOURCES:** Mercedes-Benz USA Inc.; Motor Trend

getting pretty good with interiors—and the SLK reflected it.

A black old-school dashboard that's as flat as your mother's kitchen table rolled down onto a compact 4-by-6-inch navigation screen and elegant silver-faced gauges.

A light-tan lower dash

matched two beautiful leather seats fitted with respectably sporty bolsters and simple two-seam centers.

Likewise, the door tops were formed of padded black plastic with tan panels and contrasting black armrests.

I especially liked the car's flat-bottom, three-spoke steering wheel and its fine leather-wrapped shifter.

Both make good things happen. First, though, push the "sport" button on the console, which is the equivalent of a 12-ounce can of Red Bull.

The SLK's newly fortified V-6 fires off with a decent bassy growl—not quite as good as an Infiniti G37 coupe, but a definite improvement nonetheless.

Equipped with a moderately



MCT

This year, Mercedes dropped in a juicier 3.5-liter V-6 with 302 horsepower, up substantially from last year's 268. Moreover, while it can't quite dance with stars like the Boxster and Z4, the SLK 350 has the moves now to twirl them around a bit.

## All-wheel, four-wheel, front-wheel drives explained

By BRAD BERGHOLDT  
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**QUESTION:** It's now a snowy winter in the hills and mountains of Southwestern Pennsylvania. Suppose I were to buy a small model vehicle, like a Hyundai. What are the differences between front-wheel, four-wheel and all-wheel drives? What drive would be most effective in my area?—Frank C. Nugent

**ANSWER:** This is a great question, as the terms can be confusing, and new technology has created a huge number of all-wheel drive variations.

Front-wheel drive is the typical and basic two-wheel drive system used on virtually all small and midsize vehicles. Having the weight of the powertrain atop the drive wheels aids traction and stability in slippery conditions, as opposed to rear wheel drive, which is used in larger vehicles and trucks. Unwanted wheel spin during accel-

eration is also easier to control, with less chance of an accidental spin-out, compared to a rear-wheel-drive vehicle. Adding traction control to a front-wheel drive vehicle provides the simplest and least expensive solution of all the choices. Traction control uses smart engine and existing anti-lock brake system controls to limit wheel spin with virtually no additional hardware.

Four-wheel drive is typically found on larger SUVs and trucks. This term generally refers to a system that allows engageable four-wheel drive and a transfer case that provides low range gearing for demanding off-road or towing conditions. Four-wheel drive cannot be used on dry pavement, as there is no center differential to allow differing wheel speeds in the front and rear. Four-wheel drive is the most proven, sturdiest and least sophisticated of the multiple wheel drive choices, and can also be enhanced with traction control.

All-wheel drive systems are tricky to describe, as there are so many variations. All wheels are driven continuously in wet or dry conditions, with a varying distribution of torque between front and rear wheels. Some all-wheel drive systems enhance vehicle stability during all driving conditions, while others summon additional rear-wheel driving force only as conditions require it. This is the easiest to drive, most capable all-around four-wheel system, but isn't designed for serious off-roading. Highly sophisticated and sometimes-fussy mechanical components and smarts are used to blend power between the front and rear wheels, and in some cases from side to side. Adding traction control and vehicle stability control creates a super-competent light- to mid-duty driving machine.

In the vehicle size range you are considering, the choices are likely front-wheel or all-wheel drive. The trade-off boils down

to cost versus competency. If your driving conditions are frequently demanding, all-wheel drive makes a lot of sense. The down side is additional cost to purchase and some potentially scary maintenance and repair costs down the road. Compared to front-wheel drive, all-wheel drive will require slightly more fuel and might result in shorter tire life.

I like things simple and easy to live with. Mechanical things break, and electronic stuff usually doesn't. If it were me, I'd look at front-wheel drive with traction control and stability assist, if available. And when conditions are really lousy, park it and switch to the 4x4 pickup, with plow.

*Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.*

sporting seven-speed automatic, the SLK jumped away from stops with a lusty surge.

But—surprise, surprise—it continued to pull strongly after the initial burst of low-end torque, sprinting hard to 6,500 rpm.

In sport mode, the SLK's computers snap off quicker shifts and hold the transmission in gears longer.

The combination of new motor and seven-speed tranny is capable of a highly credible blast to 60 in 5.1 seconds, ac-

cording to Motor Trend. It can also achieve reasonable economy of 20 miles per gallon in the city and 29 on the highway, according to the feds.

The SLK's improved handling might be an even bigger achievement—though you also get a really firm, almost flinty ride over inner-city surfaces.

Before you look for smoother pavement, find some curves. The car's brakes are so strong that you almost can't overcook a corner.

But you may be tempted. The 3,400-pound SLK turns into corners with newfound aggression, unhindered by body lean or squirm.

## Short trips are trouble no matter car's age

By PAUL BRAND  
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)



**QUESTION:** My wife's co-worker lives about two blocks from the office. Her older Jeep Cherokee has starting problems that may be battery-related. I suspect it cranks slowly, even though the battery is newer.

**Batteries can wear out after just a few years, so I think the charging system should be tested. Her son thinks new spark plugs would help. I also suggested that those really short trips can shorten the life of the exhaust system and require more frequent oil changes. I know there are all sorts of opinions on short trips, warming the car and oil change intervals, so is there really a good rule of thumb these days?**

**ANSWER:** It's sort of a good-news-bad-news scenario. The good news is that modern engine technology, materials, manufacturing and electronic fuel and spark management have made engines more efficient during warm-up. There's much less rich fuel-air mixture and unburned fuel going through the cylinders as the engine warms up, so fouled spark plugs, oil contamination and drivability problems are fewer. And of course, cold starts are quicker and cleaner.

Now, the bad news. There is still considerable condensation in the engine and exhaust system when starting a cold engine. This contributes to oil contamination and exhaust system corrosion. Frequent cold starts without a full warm-up can also contribute to carbon deposits on valves, pistons, rings and combustion chambers. Frequent cold starts and short trips may not keep the battery fully charged, thus leading to shorter battery life. Remember, starting batteries do not like to be left not fully charged. The sulfate buildup on the battery plates can permanently harden and reduce cranking capacity.

So, some things change while others stay the same. In this case, I still recommend at least 30 minutes of driving at full operating temperature at least once per week to evaporate moisture, minimize deposits and keep the battery fully charged. Also, consider cold weather operation as "severe service" and change the oil and filter more frequently, perhaps every 2,500 to 3,500 miles.

■ ■ ■

**Q:** I have a 2004 Subaru Outback with minor head gasket leaks for the past year or so. During a month or so, I add maybe 2 tablespoons of antifreeze mix. It has never overheated and the drips on the floor appear minor. What damage can occur to the engine if I delay in replacing the gaskets? Can I use a stop-leak additive?

**A:** Besides allowing the coolant to drop to a dangerous level and overheating the engine, what you should be concerned about is coolant leaking into the combustion chambers, causing oil dilution, corrosion to aluminum pistons and serious lubrication problems.

But, from your description, it looks like the head gaskets are leaking externally, not internally. Other than the loss of coolant and mess on the garage floor, no engine damage will occur. I've had good success with minor external and internal coolant leaks with Zecol's Mendtite and Gunk's Solder Seal, cooling system stop-leak additives you can find in auto-parts stores. I wouldn't hesitate to try a stop-leak product for this minor coolant leak. You might be amazed at the results.

# Life&Style

## 'The Artist' earns best-picture, lead-actor Oscars

By **DAVID GERMAIN**  
AP MOVIE WRITER

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—"The Artist" won five Academy Awards on Sunday including best picture, becoming the first silent film to triumph at Hollywood's highest honors since the original Oscar ceremony 83 years ago.

Among other prizes for the black-and-white comic melodrama were best actor for Jean Dujardin and director for Michel Hazanavicius.

The other top Oscars went to Meryl Streep as best actress for "The Iron Lady," Octavia Spencer as supporting actress for "The Help" and Christopher Plummer as supporting actor for "Beginners."

"The Artist" is the first silent winner since the World War I saga "Wings" was named outstanding picture at the first Oscars in 1929 had a silent film earned the top prize.

"I am the happiest director in the world," Hazanavicius said, thanking the cast, crew and canine co-star Uggie. "I also want to thank the financier, the crazy person who put money in the movie."

The other wins for "The Artist" were musical score and art direction. Martin Scorsese's Paris adventure "Hugo" also won five Oscars, all in technical categories.

Streep's win was her first Oscar in 29 years, since she won best actress for "Sophie's Choice." She had lost 12 times in a row since then. Streep also has a supporting-actress Oscar for 1979's "Kramer vs. Kramer."

"When they called my name, I had this feeling I could hear half of America go, 'Oh, no, why her again?' But whatever," Streep said, laughing.

"I really understand I'll never be up here again. I really want to think all my colleagues, my friends. I look out here and I see my life before my eyes, my old friends, my new friends. Really, this is such a great honor but the thing that counts the most with me is the friendship and the love and the sheer job we've shared making moves together," said Streep, the record-holder with 17 acting nominations.

Streep is only the fifth performer to receive three Oscars. Jack Nicholson, Ingrid Bergman and Walter Brennan all earned three, while Katharine Hepburn won four.

It was a night that went as expected, with front-runners claiming key prizes. Streep's triumph provided a bit of drama, since she had been in a two-woman race with Viola Davis for "The Help."

The biggest surprise may have been the length of the show, which clocked in at about three hours and 10 minutes, brisk for a ceremony that has run well over four hours some years.

The 82-year-old Plummer became the oldest acting winner ever for his role as an elderly widower who comes out as gay in "Beginners."

"You're only two years older than me, darling," Plummer said, addressing his Oscar statue in this 84th year of the awards. "Where have you been all my life? I have a confession to make. When I first emerged from my mother's womb, I was already rehearsing my Oscar speech."

The previous oldest winner was best-actress recipient Jessica Tandy for "Driving Miss Daisy," at age 80.

Completing an awards-season blitz that took her from Hollywood bit player to star, Spencer won for her role in "The Help" as a headstrong black maid whose willful ways continually land her in trouble with white employers in 1960s Mississippi.

Spencer wept throughout her breathless speech, in which she apologized between laughing and crying for running a bit long on her time limit.

"Thank you, academy, for putting

a throwback to the early decades of cinema. Other than Charles Chaplin, who continued to make silent films into the 1930s, and Mel Brooks, who scored a hit with the 1976 comedy "Silent Movie," few people have tried it since talking pictures took over in the late 1920s.

The only other filmmaker from France to win the directing Oscar is "The Pianist" creator Roman Polanski, who was born in France, moved to Poland as a child and has lived in France since fleeing Hollywood in the 1970s on charges he had sex with a 13-year-old girl.

Hazanavicius, known in his home

income tax," Oscar host Billy Crystal joked about the "Potter" franchise.

Another beloved big-screen bunch, the Muppets, finally got their due at the Oscars. "The Muppets" earned the best-song award for "Man or Muppet," the sweet comic duet sung by Jason Segel and his Muppet brother in the film, the first big-screen adventure in 12 years for Kermit the frog and company.

Earlier Muppet flicks had been nominated for four music Oscars but lost each time, including the song prize for "The Rainbow Connection," Kermit's signature tune from 1979's "The Muppet Movie."

"I grew up in New Zealand watching the Muppets on TV. I never dreamed I'd get to work with them," said "Man or Muppet" writer Bret McKenzie of the musical comedy duo Flight of the Conchords, who joked about meeting Kermit for the first time. "Like many stars here tonight, he's a lot shorter in real life."

Filmmaker Alexander Payne picked up his second writing Oscar, sharing the adapted-screenplay prize for the Hawaiian family drama "The Descendants" with co-writers Nat Faxon and Jim Rash. Payne, who also directed "The Descendants," previously won the same award for "Sideways."

Payne said he brought along his mother from Omaha, Neb., to the Oscars, and that she had demanded a shout-out if he made it onstage.

"She made me promise that if I ever won another Oscar I had to dedicate it to her just like Javier Bardem did with his Oscar. So mom, this one's for you. Thank you for letting me skip nursery school so we could go to the movies."

Woody Allen earned his first Oscar in 25 years, winning for original screenplay for the romantic fantasy "Midnight in Paris," his biggest hit in decades. It's the fourth Oscar for Allen, who won for directing and screenplay on his 1977 best-picture winner "Annie Hall" and for screenplay on 1986's "Hannah and Her Sisters."

Allen also is the record-holder for writing nominations with 15, and his three writing Oscars ties the record shared by Charles Brackett, Paddy Chayefsky, Francis Ford Coppola and Billy Wilder.

No fan of awards shows, Allen predictably skipped Sunday's ceremony, where he also was up for best director and "Midnight in Paris" was competing in vain for best picture.

Best-picture front-runner "The Artist," which ran second to "Hugo" with 10 nominations, won Oscars for musical score and costume design.

"Rango," with Johnny Depp providing the voice of a desert lizard that becomes a hero to a parched Western town, won for best animated feature.

"Someone asked me if this film was for kids, and I don't know. But it was certainly created by a bunch of grown-ups acting like children," said "Rango" director Gore Verbinski, who made the first three of Depp's "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies.

Crystal got the show off to a lively start with a star-laden montage in which he hangs out with Justin Bieber and gets a nice wet kiss from George Clooney.

Back as Oscar host for the first time



Jean Dujardin poses with his award for best actor for "The Artist" during the 84th Academy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

me with the hottest guy in the room," Spencer said, referring to last year's supporting-actor winner Christian Bale, who presented her Oscar.

Dujardin became the first Frenchman to win an acting Oscar. French actresses have won before, including Marion Cotillard and Juliette Binoche.

"Oh, thank you. Oui. I love your country!" said Dujardin, who plays George Valentin, a silent-film superstar fallen on hard times as the sound era takes over. If George Valentin could speak, Dujardin said, "he'd say... 'Merci beaucoup, formidable!'"

Claiming Hollywood's top-filmmaking honor completes Hazanavicius' sudden rise from popular movie-maker back home in France to internationally celebrated director.

Hazanavicius had come in as the favorite after winning at the Directors Guild of America Awards, whose recipient almost always goes on to claim the Oscar.

The win is even more impressive given the type of film Hazanavicius made, a black-and-white silent movie that was

country for the "OSS 117" spy comedies but virtually unheard of in Hollywood previously, won a prize that eluded half a dozen of France's most-esteemed filmmakers, including Jean Renoir, Francois Truffaut and Louis Malle, who all were nominated for directing Oscars but never won.

The five Oscars for "Hugo," which led contenders with 11 nominations, included cinematography, art direction and visual effects.

The visual-effects prize had been the last chance for the "Harry Potter" franchise to win an Oscar. The finale, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2," had been nominated for visual effects and two other Oscars but lost all three. Previous "Harry Potter" installments had lost on all nine of their nominations.

The teen wizard may never have struck Oscar gold, but he has a consolation prize: \$7.7 billion at the box office worldwide, including \$1.3 billion from "Deathly Hallows: Part 2," last year's top-grossing movie.

"And yet they only paid 14 percent

### WINNERS' LIST

List of the 84th Annual Academy Award winners announced Sunday:

1. **Cinematography:** "Hugo."
2. **Art Direction:** "Hugo."
3. **Costume Design:** "The Artist."
4. **Makeup:** "The Iron Lady."
5. **Foreign Language Film:** "A Separation," Iran.
6. **Supporting Actress:** Octavia Spencer, "The Help."
7. **Film Editing:** "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo."
8. **Sound Editing:** "Hugo."
9. **Sound Mixing:** "Hugo."
10. **Documentary Feature:** "Undefeated."
11. **Animated Feature Film:** "Rango."
12. **Visual Effects:** "Hugo."
13. **Supporting Actor:** Christopher Plummer, "Beginners."
14. **Original Score:** "The Artist."
15. **Original Song:** "Man or Muppet" from "The Muppets."
16. **Adapted Screenplay:** Alexander Payne, Nat Faxon and Jim Rash, "The Descendants."
17. **Original Screenplay:** Woody Allen, "Midnight in Paris."
18. **Live Action Short Film:** "The Shore."
19. **Documentary (short subject):** "Saving Face."
20. **Animated Short Film:** "The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore."
21. **Directing:** Michel Hazanavicius, "The Artist."
22. **Actor:** Jean Dujardin, "The Artist."
23. **Actress:** Meryl Streep, "The Iron Lady."
24. **Best Picture:** "The Artist."

Oscar winners previously presented this season:

- **Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award:** Oprah Winfrey.
- **Honorary Award:** James Earl Jones.
- **Honorary Award:** Dick Smith.
- **Gordon E. Sawyer Award:** Douglas Trumbull.
- **Award of Merit:** ARRI cameras.

in eight years, Crystal also did his signature introduction of the best-picture nominees with a goofy song medley.

Spoofing a scene from "Midnight in Paris," Bieber told Crystal he was there to bring in the 18-to-24-year-old demographic for the 63-year-old host.

Crystal's return as host seemed appropriate on a night that had Hollywood looking back fondly on more than a century of cinema history.

The top two nominees—"Hugo" and "The Artist"—are both love songs to early cinema.

Add the Marilyn Monroe tale "My Week with Marilyn"—which earned Michelle Williams a best-actress nomination as the Hollywood's greatest sex goddess and Kenneth Branagh a supporting-actor nomination as Oscar winner Laurence Olivier—and the show's producers had a ready-made script for a night of fond recollection and backslapping about show business.

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**Act of Valor**

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Monday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Emilio Rivera, Roselyn Sanchez  
Adventure, Action • Rated R

#### Synopsis

An elite team of US Navy SEALs race against the clock to stop a planned terrorist attack on U.S. soil in this film inspired by actual events, which also features a cast of active-duty soldiers. With each successful mission, the Bandito Platoon uncovers another piece of the puzzle that leads them on a worldwide chase to prevent an act of terror that could alter the course of history. Later, at the U.S./Mexico border, the fight for the future of America comes to an explosive climax. Even when it seems as if evil may prevail, the courageous, determined SEALs never show signs of backing down or giving up.

**Gone**

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Amanda Seyfried, Sebastian Stan  
Suspense, Thriller • Rated PG 13

#### Synopsis

A young woman (Amanda Seyfried) prepares to confront the serial killer who previously abducted her, and who has now sought vengeance by kidnapping her sister in this thriller that also features Jennifer Carpenter and Sebastian Stan.

**Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance**

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:45
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Monday thru Thursday		4:05	7:05	

Nicolas Cage, Ciarán Hinds, Violante Placido  
Action • Rated PG 13

#### Synopsis

Nicolas Cage returns as the spirit of vengeance with this sequel to 2007's Ghost Rider from the Crank team of Mark Neveldine and Brian Taylor.

**This Means War**

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Monday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Reese Witherspoon, Chris Pine  
Comedy • Rated PG 13

**Journey2: Mysterious Island**

Friday		4:15	7:15	9:55
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:55
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Monday thru Thursday		4:15	7:15	

The Rock, Vanessa Hudgens, Michael Caine  
Adventure • Rated PG

**Safe House**

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Denzel Washington, Ryan Reynolds  
Spy film, Thriller • Rated R

**Chronicle**

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Dane DeHaan, Alex Russell  
Thriller • Rated PG 13

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## God, family make appearance on Oscar red carpet

By BETH HARRIS  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It wasn't hard to spot Elvis Presley's old co-star on the Oscars red carpet. She was the one wearing the nun's habit.

Mother Dolores Hart, who left Hollywood 49 years ago to pursue a religious life, made a dramatic return Sunday to take part in the 84th annual Academy Awards ceremony.

The Oscar-nominated documentary short film "God Is the Bigger Elvis," tells the 73-year-old nun's story.

"It's absolutely an extraordinary event," said Mother Dolores, her voice barely audible above the red carpet's screaming bleacher fans. "Believe me, this is very different than being in the monastery."

Hart left Hollywood in 1963 after starring in films with Presley, George Hamilton, and others.

But even before her departure, she revealed Sunday, she was being drawn to her future calling.

"One of the things that Elvis and I did when we made 'King Creole' was we opened the Bible every afternoon before we went on set and we listened to the words of the Lord," she recalled.

Asked what Presley would think of her nomination, she replied, "I think he would be very happy."

■ ■ ■ ■

He was in line for a possible Academy Award but Nick Nolte was just as concerned about something he might be losing.

"I'm worried about my teeth falling out," Nolte, nominated for supporting actor for "Warrior" said on the Oscar red carpet.

"See, this one wobbles. It's barely hanging in there," he said, pushing on his left front tooth.

The 70-year-old actor, who polished off a can of Red Bull energy drink before stopping to talk, said he's been too busy working on the HBO series "Luck" to visit a dentist.

■ ■ ■ ■

Melissa McCarthy turned her first visit to the Academy Awards into a family affair.

She was surrounded by her husband, parents and sister as she got ready for the big evening.

"My dad got choked up, then I got choked up, then my mom went, then my sister went," she said. "My husband was like, 'Separate!' Because we all cried."

During awards season McCarthy, nominated for supporting actress for "Bridesmaids," has



Dolores Hart arrives before the 84th Academy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

given frequent shoutouts to her hometown, the Chicago suburb of Plainfield, Ill.

"We cleaned the whole town out," she said of taking her big family to Hollywood. "There's nobody left tonight."

■ ■ ■ ■

It was also a family affair for Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie on the Oscar red carpet.

With the show just a few minutes from starting, Hollywood's supercouple were headed into the theater when Jolie abruptly stopped and walked back to-

ward the red carpet. There, she took Pitt's parents by the hands and led them to a group of reporters for some interviews.

As Pitt rejoined her, the crowd chanted, "Brad and Angie."

■ ■ ■ ■

Every film-buff family has their Oscar traditions.

For mother Lindsey Haley, 52, and daughter Brooke Wetzel, 30, Oscar night means Chinese food from their favorite Los Angeles restaurant and dissecting red carpet fashion.

But this year, they traded the take-out for a front-row view.

Haley and Wetzel were among 800 fans who won a lottery to sit in the bleachers along the red carpet outside the Hollywood & Highland Center.

Along with a swag bag full of snacks, they got a free makeover in the hours before the show.

As their favorite stars Brad Pitt, Sandra Bullock and Viola Davis walked the carpet, the mother and daughter screamed out the celebrities' names, hoping they would turn and wave for a picture. In most cases, the stars did.

"This is a big day for them, whether they are nominated or presenting, and for them to be friendly to us, that's a big deal," said Haley.

## Baron Cohen spills 'ashes' on Seacrest at Oscars

By JAKE COYLE  
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

Outfitted extravagantly in character, Sacha Baron Cohen ran amuck on the Oscars' red carpet Sunday night and all over E! host Ryan Seacrest's tuxedo.

After initially being dis-invited by the academy, Baron Cohen was allowed to attend the ceremony acting as the kind of Moammar Gadhafi parody he plays in his upcoming film, "The Dictator." As expected, he brought his unique brand of publicity stunt and method comedy.

It came at Seacrest's expense, though.

Flanked by two flower girls, he jokingly claimed to be carrying the ashes of the late North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, whose face was displayed on the container.

In an interview with Seacrest,



Sacha Baron Cohen, center, smiles after dropping a substance on the red carpet as he arrives before the 84th Academy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

he claimed it was Jong Il's dream "to be sprinkled over the red carpet and over Halle Berry's chest." Then, as Seacrest was bending down, he spilled the ashes over Seacrest's tuxedo.

Few maintain calm on the red carpet more than the awards

show veteran, but even Seacrest looked shaken as he attempted to dust himself off.

As security muscled Baron Cohen away, Seacrest attempted to cut to commercial, but his E! colleagues sought to milk the incident. It quickly became

the most-chatted about topic on Twitter, where commentators eagerly lapped up the rare breach in decorum at the Academy Awards.

Said Seacrest: "Anything can happen and it most certainly did, all over my lapel."

## What you didn't see on TV during the Oscars

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Even the hundreds of photographers, TV cameras and webcams around the Hollywood & Highland Center can't capture every starry moment of Sunday's 84th annual Academy Awards.

Celebrities reunite on the red carpet, mingle during commercial breaks and experience impromptu star-crossings in the wings—and we've got our eyes and ears trained on those moments.

From arrivals to after-parties, here's a running account of what you didn't see on TV:

3:22—"Is the house open?," a casually dressed Billy Crystal

asks a backstage security crew a little more than two hours before the Oscar show is to begin. Wearing jeans, a sweater, sneakers and his Oscar credential, Crystal gazes out at an empty theater as he hits his marks and silently rehearses his monologue. A few minutes later, he's gone.

3:26 p.m.—Outside the theater, things are beginning to heat up, thanks in no small part to the arrival of perennial Oscar heartthrob George Clooney. The fan bleachers erupt in a chorus of cheers and whoops as Clooney arrives on the red carpet, bobbing his head in time

to chants of "George, George, George." With him is his date, Stacy Keibler. Decked out in a stunning gold gown, she could almost pass as the gold-plated Oscar's sister.

3:27 p.m.—Matthew Lillard of "The Descendants" plays air guitar on the red carpet before taking off his jacket and breaking into a faux strip tease amid a shout from the bleachers of "Shaggy," a tribute to his role in the "Scooby-Doo" movies.

3:40 p.m.—Morgan Freeman quietly slides in through a back door to the theater and heads straight for the green room.

4:01 p.m.—Viola Davis asks the bleacher crowd what it thinks of her new cropped copper 'do. The crowd responds with an enthusiastic cheer.

4:03 p.m.—Clooney, who a few minutes earlier had promised the bleacher crowd he would return, keeps his word. He walks right up to a throng of fans to shake hands and sign autographs.

4:27 p.m.—Tina Fey, Antonio Banderas and Melanie Griffith speed through the red carpet, using the center lane that separates the famous from the not really so much so.

# 'Act of Valor' storms the box office

**NEW YORK (AP)**—On Oscar weekend, the real-life action stars of "Act of Valor" bested Hollywood's pretend heroes.

The Relativity Media action flick, starring real, active-duty U.S. Navy SEALs, topped the weekend box office, earning \$24.7 million according to studio estimates Sunday. That was a strong opening for a unique film made in collaboration with the Navy, which sought to demonstrate the skill and bravery of the SEALs without Hollywood imitation.

"How often can you repeat the same heroes that are big stars pretending to be heroes?" said Kyle

1. "Act of Valor," \$24.7 million.
2. "Tyler Perry's Good Deeds," \$16 million.
3. "Journey 2: The Mysterious Island," \$13.5 million.
4. "Safe House," \$11.4 million.
5. "The Vow," \$10 million.
6. "Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance," \$8.8 million.
7. "This Means War," \$8.5 million.
8. "Wanderlust," \$6.6 million.
9. "Gone," \$5 million.
10. "The Secret World of Arrietty," \$4.5 million.

Davies, president of worldwide distribution for Relativity. "I think moviegoers are ready for a

new, fresh experience."

"Act of Valor" led another strong weekend at the box office, as it was up 24.4 percent over the corresponding weekend last year. Attendance this year is up 20.4 percent, a surge that hasn't been driven by Academy Awards contenders but by new films in a traditionally tepid movie-going season.

"The newcomers this year have just been igniting the box office," said Paul Dergarabedian, box office analyst for Hollywood.com. "It's a very competitive marketplace for both the Oscar contenders and the newcomers."

Lionsgate's "Tyler Perry's

Good Deeds," a more dramatic offering for the consistently popular Perry, opened with a healthy \$16 million. Its audience was resoundingly female (76 percent) and may have been slightly diminished by the appeal of Denzel Washington in the thriller "Safe House." That earned \$11.4 million, bringing its cumulative total to \$98.1 million.

The weekend's other new releases—the thriller "Gone" and the comedy "Wanderlust"—had weaker debuts. The latter, a comedy with Paul Rudd and Jennifer Aniston, earned \$6.6 million. "Gone," starring Amanda Seyfried, took in \$5 million.

## Iranian 'A Separation' wins best foreign Oscar

In a humble speech amid tense times, Asghar Farhadi accepted Iran's first Oscar for best foreign film as a chance to celebrate a culture "hidden under the heavy dust of politics."

It was a stirring reminder, instantly hailed at the Los Angeles ceremony and around the globe, of the human side behind rising geopolitical animosity.

The acclaimed domestic drama "A Separation" is the first Iranian film to win the award. The only other Iranian movie ever nominated was 1997's "Children of Heaven," which was defeated by Italy's "Life Is Beautiful."

Writer-director Farhadi alluded to the tensions over his home country.

Amid talk of "war, intimidation and aggression" among politicians, he said, Iran is "spoken here through her glorious culture, a rich and ancient culture that has been hidden under the heavy dust of politics."

With his daughter, Sarina Farhadi, who co-stars in the film, looking on from the audience, Farhadi added: "I proudly offer this award to the people of my country, the people who respect all cultures and civilizations and despise hostility and resentment."

Tensions between the West and Iran have risen in recent months over Tehran's nuclear program. Iran denies Western claims that it seeks to develop atomic weapons, and says its disputed nuclear program is designed to produce energy and medical isotopes.

But Iranian cinema has for years been among the most exciting in the world, notably including the films of Abbas Kiarostami and Majid Majidi.

In Iran, followers of Iranian state TV said the Oscar win shows the world-class talent and sophistication in the Islamic Republic even as it confronts the West over its nuclear program. Comments and Twitter messages posted on Press TV's website expressed hope that the award could help show the common ground between the U.S. and Iran.

The widely-hailed "A Separation" was so roundly supported by the academy that it was also

nominated for a best screenplay Oscar—a rarity for a foreign film. It also won best foreign film at the Golden Globes.

Though the film, made under Iranian sensors, isn't overly political, it deeply explores the complex social and religious codes of contemporary Iranian society. The film begins with the divorce dispute between a husband (Peyman Moadi) and wife (Leila Hatami), a situation that becomes far thornier when an argument leads to criminal charges.

This year's Oscars took on a broadly international flavor, particularly given that the best picture favorite, "The Artist," is in most ways a French film, made by a French director (Michael Hazanavicius) and starring a French actor (Jean Dujardin).

The Mexican actor Demian Bichir was also nominated for best actor for his performance in the immigrant drama "A Better Life," and the Spanish film "Chico and Rita" was nominated for best animated film.

In all, 63 films were submitted for this year's foreign language film category, a nomination process that has often been criticized for leaving out critical favorites. In recent years, an executive committee was added to the multi-step process, which can add movies to those selected by the judging body.

Few founded major fault with this year's selections, though there were quibbles over the absence of the Turkish film "Once Upon a Time in Anatolia," the Finnish submission "Le Havre" and Pedro Almodovar's "The Skin I Live In," which Spain opted not to submit.

The other nominees were Michael R. Roskam's crime drama "Bullhead" from Belgium; Philippe Falardeau's immigrant substitute teacher tale "Monsieur Lazhar" from Canada; Joseph Cedar's Talmudic scholar saga "Footnote" from Israel; and Agnieszka Holland's World War II drama "In Darkness" from Poland.

Last year, Denmark's submission, "In a Better World," directed by Susanne Bier, was the winner. (AP)

## QUOTABLE QUOTES



Meryl Steep poses with her award for best actress for "The Iron Lady" during the 84th Academy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Notable quotes from the 84th Annual Academy Awards held Sunday at the Hollywood & Highland Center:

■ "You're only two years older than me, darling. Where have you been all my life?"—Christopher Plummer, on winning for best supporting actor for "Beginners." At 82, he is the oldest Oscar winner ever.

■ "At this time many Iranians all over the world are watching us and I imagine them to be very happy. They are happy not just because of an important award or a film or a filmmaker, but because at the time when talk of war, intimidation, and aggression is exchanged between pol-

iticians the name of their country, Iran, is spoken here through her glorious culture, a rich and ancient culture that has been hidden under the heavy dust of politics."—Asghar Farhadi, director-writer-producer, on winning best foreign language film for "A Separation."

■ "I was genuinely star-struck when I met Kermit the Frog. Like many stars here tonight, he's a lot shorter in real life."—Bret McKenzie, who won best original song for "Man or Muppet."

■ "Let's get out of here."—Kirk Baxter, on winning achievement in film editing for "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo."

## Mom cringes at bad example her boyfriend's children set

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**  
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

**DEAR ABBY:** My boyfriend has proposed. I love him very much, but I'm worried about my kids. I look at his children—his son is 23 and barely made it out of high school. He got a girl pregnant at 17, has been in jail a few times and is an alcoholic. His 15-year-old daughter is immature for her age and constantly getting into trouble at school. Their mother is an alcoholic and a drug user. Are my concerns for my children valid?



*Dear Abby*

WORRIED IN WEST VIRGINIA

**DEAR WORRIED:** Yes, they are, because your children will be exposed to all of the negative influences that his children will bring with them into your blended family. Be smart and hold off marrying your boyfriend until your children are old enough not to be influenced by his children. Your first concern must be for your children's well-being.

■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** I read your answer to "Thrilled in San Jose" (Dec. 28), the couple who want to celebrate paying off their mortgage, on the same day I read an article about how middle-class Americans have sabotaged themselves by abandoning thrifty habits like saving and ... paying off their mortgages!

I disagree with your answer that the couple should celebrate privately. A generation of Americans now has no idea that paying off a mortgage is even possible. So I say to that couple: Celebrate tastefully and publicly in the same thrifty way that enabled you to pay off that mortgage. And while you're at it, be prepared to share the tips and habits that enabled you to achieve this wonderful success. Who knows? Your party might educate and inspire.

I'D LIKE AN INVITATION

**DEAR I'D LIKE:** I was surprised at the number of readers who were fired up over my answer to "Thrilled" about burning the mortgage. Most said that this is a milestone that should be celebrated. My readers comment:

■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** I think it's great to throw a mortgage-burning party to celebrate paying off a home mortgage. Today we go overboard not to offend. True friends would be happy when something good happens and not jealous. How self-centered is that attitude? People need to start feeling happy for the success of others.

LORI IN GIG HARBOR, WASH.

■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** I believe "Thrilled" and her husband should have their mortgage-burning party. Achievements like this should be celebrated. Too often in our country people have piled on debt they couldn't afford and made decisions purely to keep up with "the Joneses." By sharing their success story, including any struggles they may have overcome, they can be an inspiration for the loved ones in their lives to follow.

DEBBIE IN THE SOUTHWEST

■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** Please advise "Thrilled" not to ACTUALLY burn the mortgage. In California the lender has to provide a release document in the form of a Deed of Reconveyance or Satisfaction of Mortgage that must be recorded with the county recorder's office in order to remove the lien of the loan from the chain of title for the house. If the lender doesn't record it, then the borrower must do so—copies don't count; originals do. If "Thrilled" decided to sell the house and the release has not been recorded, or if she doesn't have the original, it could delay the sale by months.

LINDA IN SAN FRANCISCO

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

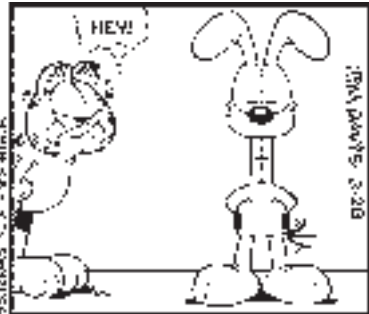
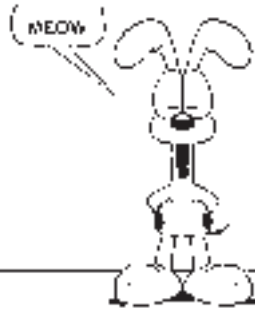
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ACROSS

1 Lumpy's search

5 out (noun)

8 Apollo's (last.)

12 Others (last.)

13 Mrs. McKinley

14 Falser

15 Crucial's ilk

17 Kinky

18 Before

19 Follow

20 Rajah's (adjective)

21 Aud's

22 On the phone

23 Counterfeit

26 Spoke highly of

30 Mai melody

31 Bliss

32 It's a capital

33 On a wheel

35 Underneath

DOWN

1 Grist

2 Winger

3 Key — pie

4 Once

5 Mergulhy

6 Bible's garden

7 Petrol

8 Grumpy's

9 Stead

10 Jewish month

11 Teller's

16 Lion of Judah

20 Vast

21 Marshes

22 Paratrooper

23 Outpost

24 Man-craft

25 Martin's ingredient

26 Spencer-craft

27 Scale

28 Connection

29 Philip's

29 Manning's

31 Lustrous black

34 Hermit's

35 Foxglove

37 Starry's

38 Preliminary

39 Simple

40 Gold

41 Nickel

42 Gravel Lake

43 Arizona city

44 Addict

46 Custer's

47 Wall climb

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 1-9.

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-285-5951 for an instant, touch-to-win phone game (7 days a week) or visit [www.tribune.com](http://www.tribune.com).

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Jason Aldean, 35; Ali Larter, 36; Eric Lindros, 39; Pat Monahan, 43.

**Happy Birthday:** Look, see and do. It's up to you to take the initiative to make things happen in both your personal and professional life. Aggressive action will send a progressive message that will attract those willing to get behind you. Utilize past connections in order to cut corners. Your numbers are 6, 12, 22, 24, 30, 35, 43.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Get down to business. you can make a lasting impression by utilizing your skills and incorporating detail and precision. An energetic and aggressive approach will ensure that you outshine the competition. Love is in the stars. \*\*\*

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Operate as a team player. Share your ideas and listen to suggestions. A give-and-take attitude will lead to greater accomplishments. Open up and express your feelings and you will find out where you stand and what your options are. \*\*\*

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Not everyone will be open with you. Before you make a move, you'd be wise to discuss your concerns and incorporate stipulations that will cover you should someone renege or hold back information you require to make a decision. \*\*\*

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Take greater interest in what everyone around you is doing and you will avoid making an impulsive mistake. Progressive action regarding your position and partnerships will encourage

favours, good will and success. Home improvements will pay off. \*\*\*\*

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Listen, but don't put too much value on what's said. It's important to maintain your position and to show confidence when dealing with peers. A matter regarding a personal arrangement should be dealt with before it has a chance to escalate. \*\*

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Travel, learning and expanding your philosophical, religious or psychological awareness will help you get ahead personally and professionally. Changing your environment will alter your perspective regarding what you've done in the past and what you can do in the future. \*\*\*\*

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Charm will help pave the way to success. You can make your assets grow by improving your surroundings or downsizing to fit your budget. Welcome change and it will give you greater freedom of choice. Love and romance are highlighted. \*\*\*

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** You can make things happen if you don't limit the possibilities. Believe in you and your ability to get things done. Step into the limelight and address the situations you face head-on to win support and impress someone influential. \*\*\*

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Honesty will be the issue when it comes to friendships. Not living up to your promises will hurt your reputation and leave you in an awkward position. Open up and let any decision that is being made be based on truth. \*\*\*

**EUGENIA LAST**

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Organize your schedule and you will be able to fulfill both personal and professional responsibilities. A moneymaking deal that will influence your home, family and living arrangements is apparent. Steer clear of unfaithful romantic temptation. \*\*\*\*

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Keep things simple. Too much of anything, including your opinion, will get you into trouble when dealing with friends, relatives or neighbors. Consider your attributes and you will find your niche. \*\*

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Stick to what you know and the people you are most familiar with in order to reach your goals. A chance to partner with someone from your past will open doors to future prospects. Share your interests, thoughts and plans for the future. \*\*\*\*

**Birthday Baby:** You are aggressive, timely and precise. You are open, adaptable and productive. Eugenia's Web sites: [eugenialast.com](http://eugenialast.com) for confidential consultations, [myspace.com/eugenialast](http://myspace.com/eugenialast) for Eugenia's blog, [astroadvice.com](http://astroadvice.com) for fun

**SUDOKU**

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

Difficulty Level: \*\*

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**WONDERWORD** By DAVID QUELLE

HOW TO PLAY: Fill in the empty squares with the letters A through Z. The words are hidden in the grid. Some letters are already filled in. The words are hidden in the grid. Some letters are already filled in. The words are hidden in the grid. Some letters are already filled in.

Freestyle Hinting

Hidden: 9 letters

Answers: 9 letters

Yesterday's Answer: Treatment

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# Bryant, West hold on to win NBA All-Star game



**ORLANDO, Fla.** (AP)—The Kevin and Kobe show won it for the West at the NBA All-Star game, holding off LeBron James at the end.

They got an MVP and a scoring record, too.

Bryant scored 27 points, moving past Michael Jordan as the career scoring leader in the game. Kevin Durant had 36 in an MVP performance, and the Western Conference held on for a 152-149 victory over the East on Sunday night.

James and the East cut a 21-point deficit to one in the closing seconds, but weren't able to move in front. James had 36 points and fellow Heat star Dwyane Wade finished with a triple-double.

"With all these great players on the floor, you never know what will happen. Guys making big shots and they cut it down to one. We were up 18 (at half-time)," Durant said.

"It was fun. That's the type of All-Star game you want to see."

Blake Griffin scored 22 points for the West, which rang up 89 points in the first half, setting an All-Star record. But he won the game with his defense, picking off James' pass when the East had a chance to tie in the final seconds.

"I can't turn the ball over like that," James said. "I let my team down, but overall it was a great weekend."

Griffin then hit one free throw with 1.1 seconds left, and Wade was off on a 3-point attempt from the corner. He finished with 24 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists, joining Jordan and James as the only players with All-Star game triple-doubles.

Durant was the MVP, leaving Bryant tied for the All-Star record with his four. But he got a bigger mark in his 13th All-Star game.

He broke Jordan's record of 262 points on a dunk with 4:57 left in the third quarter and now has 271 for his career. He entered with 244 and passed Oscar Robertson (246 points) and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (251) earlier in the game.

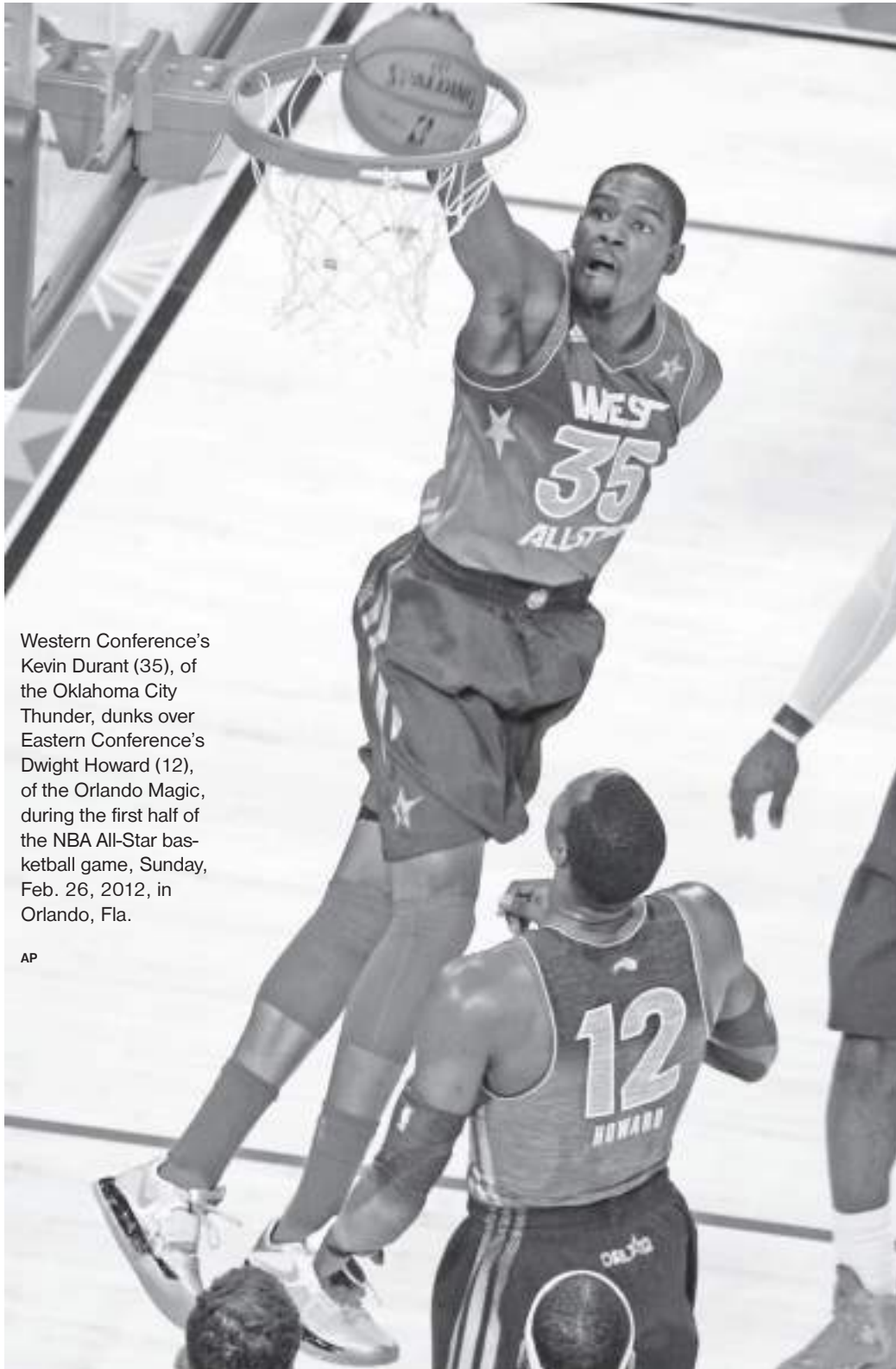
It nearly wasn't enough, as the East's comeback had the crowd filled with entertainers and athletes chanting for defense—never a part of the All-Star game vocabulary—in the final seconds.

With Bryant covering him, James hit two long 3-pointers in the final period, and the East had a chance when Bryant, with the crowd loudly booing, missed a free throw with 18 seconds left and the West up 151-149.

"Just being a competitor," James said. "They pretty much beat us up all game so we just wanted to make a game of it."

But New Jersey's Deron Williams was short on a 3-pointer, and after the East came up with it, James fired a pass into a crowd that Griffin intercepted.

On a colorful night in Orlando, from pregame performer



Western Conference's Kevin Durant (35), of the Oklahoma City Thunder, dunks over Eastern Conference's Dwight Howard (12), of the Orlando Magic, during the first half of the NBA All-Star basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in Orlando, Fla.

AP

Nicki Minaj's pink and green hair to the neon sneakers many of the stars wore, Dwight Howard had nine points and 10 rebounds as the game's host.

The NBA's first All-Star game in Orlando in 20 years wasn't close after 2 1/2 quarters. But players always say it gets competitive in the final five minutes, and James was again up for the challenge.

He hiked his scoring average to 25.9 points over his eight All-Star games, and someday he'll probably take the record

Bryant set Sunday.

But he couldn't quite catch Kobe in the game.

With the 2-year-old Amway Center considered by many the finest arena in the league, the NBA brought its midseason showcase back to Orlando for the first time since the memorable 1992 game, when Magic Johnson was MVP three months after retiring from the league because of the HIV virus.

This one was once in jeopardy of being lost when the lockout lasted into late November.

Without a settlement then, All-Star weekend may have been wiped out, as it was in 1999 following a work stoppage.

The party was saved.

James and Howard, wearing bright orange shoes, danced onto the stage for pregame introductions, Howard breaking into an enormous grin when fans gave him a thunderous ovation as the last All-Star introduced. He insists that he and Magic fans still have a love affair despite his trade request, understanding he still loves the city even if not his team, and

## Durant says winning All-Star MVP a childhood dream

**ORLANDO, Fla.** (AP)—Kevin Durant cringes a little whenever he hears his name next to words like elite or superstar.

But after winning his first All-Star MVP award with a scoring display that ranked among the best in the game's history, even Durant might have to acknowledge his own NBA stardom.

The Oklahoma City Thunder forward scored 36 points and grabbed seven rebounds Sunday night to help the West hold off a late charge from the East in a 152-149 victory.

"It's just exciting to be named (an) All-Star, but to step it up another level and become MVP, it's only something as a kid you dream about," Durant said. "Coming from where I come from, I didn't think I would be here. Everything is just a blessing to me."

His performance was a small piece of All-Star redemption for Durant after he came up just short against Minnesota's Kevin Love in Saturday night's 3-point Shootout.

Durant dazzled with a scoring barrage that included jump shots, slashing layups and dunks to help the West open a 21-point lead. He even eclipsed West teammate Kobe Bryant, who scored 27 points and passed Michael Jordan to become the top career scorer in All-Star game history.

Durant said there was no special method to how he approached the game, but said he and West coach Scott Brooks

did have a discussion back in Oklahoma City in which Durant let him know he didn't mind logging a high number of All-Star minutes.

Durant finished the night playing a game-high 37.

"I'm always like that," Durant said. "You know, every game I play in I try to be aggressive and be myself. It made it easier having my coaches over there, as well. ... People just sacrificed shots, and that's what you like to see from superstars."

Miami's Dwyane Wade said Durant will be a player to watch in future games.

"That record (Kobe) got, with KD in the league, I don't know how long it's going to last," Wade said.

Brooks said he's never amazed by the fifth-year player anymore.

"This is his first time of probably many," Brooks said of the MVP award. "I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to coach him. The guy, he does a lot of things well. ... He just comes in and does his work."

Durant said Sunday's honor ranks high on his list of career achievements, including the gold medal he won at the world championships in 2010.

"It ranks right up there at the top," Durant said. "I keep saying it, but I'm excited I got it, and I'm glad I get to celebrate this with my family and my teammates and everybody in Oklahoma City. We'll see if I get another one down the line."

its deficit in less than 6 minutes. They even started to defend—Wade whacked Bryant so hard on a drive that the Lakers star needed a break between free throws to wipe blood from his nose before sinking it to tie Jordan.

Williams scored 20 points for the East. Carmelo Anthony had 19, and Rose finished with 14.

Kevin Love, who won the 3-point contest on Saturday, scored 17 points for the West, which has won two in a row. Chris Paul had eight points and 12 assists.

## Stern: Silver worthy successor as NBA commissioner

**ORLANDO, Fla.** (AP)—David Stern will reveal only two things about his future as NBA commissioner.

He'll be retired within five years, and he hopes Adam Silver replaces him.

Stern endorsed Silver for the job on Saturday, calling the deputy commissioner and 20-year employee of the NBA a "first-rate, top of the class executive."

"I guess I would say that one of the things that a good CEO does, and I try to be a good CEO, is provide his board with a spectac-

ular choice for its successor, and I think I've done that, and that's Adam," Stern said, with Silver sitting at a table to his right.

"That's ultimately, if I had the decision, if I were doing it myself, he would be the commissioner."

However, Stern said the choice would be left to the owners, and he's given them no indication when they will have to make it.

Stern committed to a minimum of five more years on the job after the previous collective bargaining agreement was ratified in 2005. He said he's told them nothing

now, though he said the discussion would come "very soon." He repeated what he's said previously about not being around to handle the next round of negotiations, which could be in 2017 if either side exercises its right to opt out of the 10-year deal.

"I'm not going to be here when it either is or isn't reopened in six years," he said.

Silver was already the lead negotiator during the recent labor talks, leading owners through a five-month lockout to a new deal in which they saved

about \$280 million a year in player salary costs.

Stern has leaned on his longtime assistant and the former president of NBA Entertainment more frequently in recent years, often leaving it to him to answer difficult questions. He passed the microphone to Silver on a couple of occasions Saturday for questions about the league's future that Stern, 69, may not be around to answer.

He has plenty of business to complete now.

He will meet Sunday with

leadership from Sacramento and the Maloof family, who own the Kings, as the sides try to beat a March 1 deadline to complete a plan to finance a new arena the city needs to keep the team.

"We'd like the city, on behalf of the Maloofs, to make the largest possible contribution," Stern said. "The city would like the Maloofs to make the largest—both have come up with very substantial contributions. It's really getting there. It's just not there yet. And we're looking for ways, imaginative ways, to bridge the gap."

# Mahan stops McIlroy in Match Play



**M A R A -**  
**NA, Ariz.**  
( A P ) —  
Hunter Mahan stopped Rory McIlroy's march to No. 1 by

winning the Match Play Championship on Sunday.

Mahan won four holes in a five-hole stretch starting with a 9-iron to 2 feet on the sixth hole, building a 4-up lead through 10 holes. Even as McIlroy threw his best stuff at him on the back nine, Mahan responded with two clutch birdies to stay in control.

Mahan won, 2 and 1, to capture his second World Golf Championship title.

"He's the best player in the world right now," Mahan said. "I knew he'd made a charge, and he did."

McIlroy defeated Lee Westwood in the semifinals Sunday morning, a high-stakes match because if either of them won the Match Play Championship, they would replace Luke Donald atop the world ranking.

Mahan made sure that didn't happen this week.

He played 96 holes in his six matches and had 35 birdies on his scorecards. Mahan defeated Mark Wilson in his semifinal match—Wilson was his only opponent all week who had not played in a Ryder Cup or a Presidents Cup.

McIlroy, who made seven birdies in a 10-hole stretch Sunday morning to beat Westwood, couldn't muster any magic in the afternoon. He missed a 4-foot par putt that would have won the opening hole, then fell behind with a series of mistakes.

On the seventh hole, with Mahan already in trouble in a deep collection area left of the green, McIlroy pulled his short iron and joined him there. But it took McIlroy two chips to get on the green, and he lost the

Hunter Mahan poses with the Walter Hagen Cup after defeating Rory McIlroy 2 and 1 to win the Match Play Championship golf tournament on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in Marana, Ariz.

AP



hole with a double bogey.

Then McIlroy's sand wedge hopped over the green on the par-5 eighth and he lost that hole with a bogey.

Mahan's big lead was enough to withstand the McIlroy charge. The 22-year-old from Northern Ireland played the opening six holes on the back nine in 5-under par, but still picked up only one hole on Mahan.

"I tried to claw myself back, but I left myself too much work," McIlroy said.

He also got off to a slow start

against Westwood, 3 down through four holes, before roaring past him. McIlroy didn't have the shots, and didn't appear to have the energy, to do that twice in one day.

That was always his concern. There was so much anticipation about his semifinal match with Westwood.

"I knew that might be the toughest thing for me," McIlroy said. "I knew that if I got through, I had to get myself up for the final. That's not an excuse. He was solid as ever. He's

a deserving champion."

Mahan became the first American to win the Match Play Championship since Tiger Woods in 2008. He became only the sixth player to win multiple WGC titles, joining Woods, Phil Mickelson, Ernie Els, Geoff Ogilvy and Darren Clarke.

The last time Mahan was in a pressure situation against a player from Northern Ireland was in the Ryder Cup at Celtic Manor, when U.S. Open champion Graeme McDowell made a 15-foot birdie putt on the 16th

hole of the decisive match.

Even so, the memories of that match are Mahan duffing a chip on the last hole, even though McDowell was likely to win the match. Mahan has worked hard on his chipping, and he feels it carried him this week.

Two shots were pivotal.

McIlroy won his first hole by chipping in for eagle from about 60 feet on the par-5 11th. Two holes later, McIlroy was safely in for birdie and Mahan had to get up-and-down from a bunker to avoid losing another

hole. He blasted out to 6 feet and made the putt.

McIlroy birdied the 14th from 7 feet to cut the lead to 2 up, and on the 315-yard 15th, he hit driver to 30 feet for an eagle attempt. Mahan was short of the green, and elected to use his putter. He rolled it up the slope to tap-in range, and McIlroy missed.

Mahan likely goes to No. 9 in the world, the first time in his career he has been in the top 10. He earned \$1.4 million for his fourth career victory, two of them WGC titles against the world's best players.

McIlroy looked like the world's best player Sunday morning.

In the most anticipated match of the week, Westwood birdied two holes and won another when McIlroy missed a 5-footer for par to build a 3-up lead through four holes. As quickly as Westwood took the lead, he lost it.

McIlroy was simply sensational.

He made par to win the fifth hole, made a 30-foot birdie on the sixth, caught Westwood with a 15-foot birdie putt on the par-5 eighth, then took a 1-up lead to the back nine with a 5-foot birdie.

McIlroy holed a 25-foot birdie on the 12th to go 2 up, then seized control with a birdie on the 13th as Westwood was wild off the tee. His drive sailed left into the gallery, hit a woman in the back and the ball rolled down the inside of her sweater.

"Would you mind walking 250 yards forward?" quipped Billy Foster, Westwood's caddy.

That might not have mattered the way McIlroy played. He closed him out on the 17th hole.

Mahan won the first two holes against Wilson and never trailed, though he didn't take control until a birdie on the 15th hole.

In the consolation match, Wilson played the 18th hole for the first time all week and defeated Westwood, 1 up.

**FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—** The fireballer has flamed out once again, and this time it may be for good.

Minnesota Twins reliever Joel Zumaya was diagnosed with a torn ligament in his right elbow on Sunday, meaning his latest comeback bid has ended almost before it began.

Zumaya had signed an incentive-laden, one-year deal with the Twins, who hoped he could bolster their bullpen with his 100 mph heat. General manager Terry Ryan knew Zumaya's long injury history when he offered the contract, but the possibility of getting the overpowering arm that electrified the Tigers in 2006 intrigued him.

"I took a risk. It was a high risk with high reward," Ryan said after the MRI exam revealed the torn ulnar collateral ligament. "Unfortunately it didn't work. And he feels bad. I feel bad."

## Twins' Zumaya to miss another year with elbow tear

Zumaya lasted just 13 pitches in his first session of live batting practice Saturday before walking off the mound with pain in his elbow. Ryan spoke with him on Sunday after they received the news, but said it was too early to talk about Zumaya's plans for the future.

The 27-year-old could choose to have Tommy John surgery and start another exhaustive rehab program that could last a year or longer. Or he could choose to retire.

"He's distraught, as you'd expect," Ryan said of Zumaya, who was unavailable for comment. "He's going to come in here in the next day or so and we're going to talk about the immediate future for him."

Zumaya had not thrown a pitch since June 2010 after breaking his elbow while pitch-

ing for Detroit in a game at Target Field. He has never been better than in his rookie season with the Tigers, when he was a 21-year-old blast furnace who struck out 97 hitters in 83 1-3 innings and became one of the most feared setup men in the game.

Injuries to his wrist, finger and shoulder followed, limiting him to fewer than 40 innings in each of the next four seasons. Then his elbow snapped in 2010, a frightening scene that led some to wonder if his body could withstand the sheer force of the pitches he uncorked.

But he had never torn the ulnar collateral ligament in his elbow, a common and devastating injury that usually requires surgery and at least 12 months of rehab before a pitcher is ready

to get back on the mound.

After a long and arduous rehabilitation of his broken elbow, Zumaya worked out for several teams this winter. Looking for a right-hander at the back end of their bullpen to complement left-handed setup man Glen Perkins and closer Matt Capps, the Twins offered him \$850,000. The contract is only guaranteed for \$400,000.

"It's ironic that he tore this ligament because that was one of the area's he was healthy," Ryan said. "But when you have something break, sometimes other things go, too, and that's the chance you take. And that's the chance we took. I took. I'll take full responsibility for the decision, it just didn't work. It's as simple as that."



But Ryan said he didn't regret the decision to sign Zumaya.

"Sometimes you have to take chances," Ryan said. "It seemed like a worthwhile chance."

Zumaya had only been in the clubhouse for a couple of weeks, but he'd already managed to make a strong impression with the team. He pitched against the Twins for the Tigers and manager Ron Gardenhire said he quickly grew to like the heavily tattooed reliever who electrified Detroit's run to the World Series as a rookie in 2006.

"He looks like some monster out there pitching against you," Gardenhire said. "But you get him in your clubhouse and you realize there's special people and he's a special person and it's a really sad day for him and his family and our baseball team, too, because we were all

hoping this guy would be able to get back on this thing and make it through. Unfortunately it didn't work out."

Left-hander Francisco Liriano was taken aback when he heard the news.

"Wow," said Liriano, who had Tommy John surgery in 2006. "I feel bad for him. He's been hurt probably every year. Wow."

Now the Twins have to look elsewhere among the 33 pitchers they brought to camp to help shore up their bullpen. Players like Anthony Swarzak, Alex Burnett, Jared Burton and Kyle Waldrop could get looks, even though none of them have strong histories of late-inning relief roles.

"If I'm one of those guys down in that clubhouse, well, there's some innings there to be had, I'd better go out there and get 'em," Ryan said. "You want to make the team? Let's go."



Participants and guests in the 2012 Tan Holdings Doubles Badminton Competition pose for a group photo after the opening ceremony at the TSL Sports Complex.

## NMBA holds first tourney of season in new flooring

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



Northern Marianas Badminton Association kicked off its first tournament for 2012 in a new playing surface at the TSL Sports Complex.

Dubbed as the 2012 Tan Holdings Doubles Badminton Competition, the group's initial offering for the season was played last Saturday at the complex's badminton court, which featured the newly installed taraflex flooring.

Taraflex, according to one of the manufacturer's website, "are synthetic floors designed for safety and comfort. Their multi-layered construction

includes 100 percent pure vinyl, a reinforced fiberglass grid and closed-cell foam backing to provide shock absorption, help fight fatigue, deliver consistent ball bounce, and protect against skin burns." They are used by various world-governing sports bodies, such as FIBA, FIVB, ITTF, ITF, European Handball Federation, and Badminton World Federation.

NMBA president Jerry Tan during his opening remarks for the Tan Holdings tournament asked for the players' cooperation in the maintenance of the facility.

"You asked for a better if not best playing surface and we have it now. I hope that everybody will do their share in ensuring that these new flooring will

be well taken care off," Tan said.

Tournament director Macoi Aguda said NMBA members are excited about the new playing surface and said this will help further elevate their level of plays.

"The pros use this type of flooring and we're fortunate that we will be able to play in the same surface. Injuries will be lessened and players can now go all out without worrying of getting injured," Aguda said. "It will definitely help players improve their games."

Aguda was also the master of ceremony during the opening rites attended by Tan Holdings corporate consultant Dave Sablan and Tan Siu Lin Foundation manager Ed Arriola. Aguda led the introduction of players from Saipan

Badminton Club, Shirley's Badminton Club, TAGA Badminton Club, Berks Blazers, Golden Racquet, and newcomer AON Badminton Club.

After the parade of teams, Arriola and Sablan presented to the representatives of each club the \$1,200 donation for the doubles tournament. Aguda said the donation will be used for medals that will be given away to the Top 3 finishers in the men's and women's doubles Level A, B, and C.

Games in the Tan Holdings tournament will be played on weekends until March 18 with the Top 4 teams after the single round-robin elimination advancing to the playoffs. Results of Week 1 of the competition will be released later this week.

## BIG

From Page 28

7-0, while the Senior League's Docomo Pacific Ol'Aces pummeled the DPS Dare Program Enforcers, 11-0, in six innings.

Then the Big League's St. Michael's Medical Response Hunters bested the Kagman Lions, 4-1, on Sunday afternoon.

The season continues at 4pm today at the Tan Ko Field with a Senior League pairing between the Natibu Tanapag Falcons against the Hunters.

## JUNIOR LEAGUE Ol'Aces 7, Red Sox 0

Ol'Aces led it 2-0 after three innings off a pair of RBI doubles by Terson Eina and Michael Muna in the second and third frames.

The Red Sox were never able to start its engine as Ol'Aces pitcher Eina, who almost went the distance, dealt 6 2/3 of shutout innings. In all, Eina struck out 10 and gave up just two hits with three walks and a bean ball.

Red Sox's Jhayce Palacios kept his team in range from the mound, but Ol'Aces came alive after he was tapped with one out remaining in the fifth inning. Ol'Aces then went on to break open the match with a five-run burst in the sixth inning with patience at the plate and aggression in the base paths.

It was all Eina from both sides of the plate as he also swung 3-for-3 at the plate with two RBIs and a run. Ol'Aces' Jesse Brel batted 2-for-3 with an RBI, a

run, and a base on balls.

## SENIOR LEAGUE Ol'Aces 11, Enforcers 0

Docomo Pacific Ol'Aces jumped on top, 3-0, in the first inning off four hits. Jonah Flores busted an RBI double, A.J. Lizama an RBI single, and Lancaster Secharmedal chipped an RBI poke.

A two-out triple by Ol'Aces' Lizama led to another two runs in the third frame.

A walk later, T.J. Sablan stepped in and cleared the bases. He did the same thing in the fifth inning and shortly after, Ol'Aces delivered the knockout blow in the sixth inning with four more runs off four hits, including a triple by Frankie Camacho and another RBI single for Sablan.

Ol'Aces' Sablan batted 4-for-4 with five RBIs and a stolen base; Lizama batted 3-for-3 with two RBIs, three runs, two stolen bases, and a base on balls and; Camacho swung 3-for-3 with two runs.

Winning pitcher Jonah Flores got the decision after dealing 4 2/3 scoreless innings; he gave up two hits with five walks and four strikeouts. Ol'Aces closer Secharmedal finished up nicely and retired five in a row for the save.

## Lions 6, Jets 5

It was tied at 4-4 after three innings when the SCC Jets snatched the lead, 5-4, off an error in the top of the fifth inning.

The MCV Kagman Lions' top of the order answered in the top of the sixth and knotted the game back up with a

sacrifice fly by Brel Yobech that scored Justin Santos.

After four solid innings, Jets relief pitcher Allen Cabrera ran out of gas as he headed back out for the bonus frame.

The Lions jumped all over him early in the bottom of the eighth inning as third batter Yobech hammered home the game winner.

It was not all pretty, but Yobech showed big in the game and the Lions got it done; his teammate Dave Matagolai batted 2-for-3 with a sacrifice fly and two bases on balls.

Winning pitcher Cedric Ada gave up one earned run off seven hits with three walks and five strikeouts in six innings.

## BIG LEAGUE Hustlers 3, Fielders 2

Hustlers hit the board first with a run scored off an error in the opening frame, but the IT&E Fielders' top of the order shot back with three hits in the top of the fourth inning to seize control, 2-1.

Fielders' Ben Lizama led off with a triple and was doubled home by Peter Lieto.

Marvin Ngeskebei then singled him in before the Hustlers could escape the inning.

Hustlers' Brian Camacho was called over to relieve MacGarette Duenas to close the final out.

Fielders starting pitcher Ngeskebei held the edge from the mound into the final inning, but the Hustlers finally pulled things together and tied it at 2-all in the final stand.

A one-out single by Villagomez set up a clutch RBI double by Duenas that sent the game into extra innings.

Both teams came up empty in the eighth inning, and Hustlers' Villagomez took the ball to start the ninth and secured a 1-2-3 inning.

Villagomez came through big in many ways late in the game and underlined it with a two-out walk-off double that scored Kenta Castro from first base.

Hustlers' Camacho was issued the win with zero hits and just one walk with five strikeouts in 4 1/3 scoreless innings.

## Hunters 4, Kagman Lions 1

After a couple of three-up and three-down frames to start the match, St. Michael's Hunters took a 2-0 lead off some costly errors in the bottom of the third inning.

The Hunters then tacked on its other two runs in the fifth inning, largely from the result of a wild throw in what seemed like an easy play from the mound to first base that allowed Alek Lopez to the plate. The blunder would also lead to an RBI single by Joseph Atalig that scored Anthony Guerrero.

The Lions scored their lone run in the top of the fifth and never really postured a comeback.

Hunters winning pitcher Joseph Palacios gave up one run off three hits with eight strikeouts.

Notably, Lions starting pitcher Leroy Regis went six and a third innings and did not allow an earned run, but only three hits and two walks with strikeouts.

three open division finishers Ben Dillon (3:35:36), Mark Walters (3:38:56), and Derek Horton (3:42:04).

Two other Saipan bikers joined the Tour De Guahan with Florence Antonio and Susan Marchitti clocking in at 4:27:06 (third in the men's 50 to 59) and 6:07:57, respectively.

## DAISUKE

From Page 28

The reigning champs managed an early 7-3 lead and never looked back and eventually won it off a nifty floater by Matsumoto deep in the left corner.

Loomis and Leszczynski settled for runner-up honors and advanced over third place finishers, New Zealand Olympian Kirk Pitman and Guam beach volleyball national team member Dave Rillera, 21-16, in the lower bracket semifinals.

It was sweet revenge for Loomis and Leszczynski after falling to the pair, 14-21, in a tough second round draw.

In addition, 14-year-old Misaki Cramer finished in fourth place with U.S. pro John Carlucci.

In the women's grouping, third-ranked Matsumura and Oyama won their first two matches on Sunday, but fell to No. 2 seed and eventual runners-up Hiroyo Kaneda and Ashley Watanabe, 24-22.

The latter went on to advance to the finals and held a twice-to-beat advantage on the main stage.

Matsumura and Oyama, meanwhile, bit down and sliced through Kelly Saleck and Momo Matsuyama, 21-6; gashed fourth placers Elizabeth Gridey and Remi Sudo, 21-9; and then knocked off third place finishers Misumi Sakai and Kei Watanabe, 21-12, for another crack at their rivals.

The never-say-die twosome shocked Hiroyo and Watanabe, 21-18, in the first set and went on to pull off the comeback in the deciding set, 15-1.

The scrappy double-act has only been working together for two months, and were naturally delighted with their strong showing.

Both first place teams were awarded prize packages valued at \$4,000, which included a \$1,200 cash prize along with airfare, provided by Delta Airlines, as well as hotel and meal accommodations to appear in next year's event, which is set to take place in Guam. The winners also agreed to participate in some media appearances and school visits.

Second place finishers received \$900 and brand new LG cell phones from Docomo Pacific; and third placers won \$400 and a set of X-mini boom speakers also from Docomo; a multitude of other prizes were also raffled away.

All podium finishers expressed plans of reappearing in the event next year.

FIVB, the Mariana's Visitor Authority, Delta Airlines, Fiesta and the NMI-VA organized the pro-am tournament and related festivities.

Other sponsors included Docomo Pacific, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Pacific Islands Club, Saipan Grand Hotel, Godfather's Bar, Triple J Super Fresh Market, Blue Bay, Marianas Trekking, J's Restaurant, Ride CNMI, Gold's Gym, Mobil, the Tan Siu Lin Foundation, *Saipan Tribune*, Hertz Rent-A-Car, Marianas Health Services, Spectrum Electric Inc, Island Apparel, Tano Group, United Cape Air, Aon Insurance, "The Beijing Beast" Phil Dalhausser (Olympic gold medalist), Practical Solutions, KSPN, KKMP, Sea-fix Inc, Miller-Lite Island Flavor, Pepsi, Gatorade, The Visitors Channel, Spicy Thai Noodle, D& Q, Elliot Artwork, Monica's Gallery, Power 99Top Notch, Tribes Bar, Express Printing, Tropical Blend, Law Offices of William Satterberg Jr., Law Offices of Sean E. Frink, and 360 Revolving Restaurant.

The 2012 Marianas Cup concludes this weekend with the 5th Annual Marianas Kids Beach Volleyball Tournament set this Saturday. More details will be released later this week.

## MIEKO

From Page 28

from the finish line, I slowed down. It was tough but it was a pleasure to ride with strong women. I am happy to finish first in the women's division and

second overall. It was great to start the season with this win," added Carey, who thanked Guam Cycling Federation for organizing the race, her sponsors IT&E, Brubu, Bike Pro, Zoot, Salomon, and Sunnto, and her family and friends.

It was double celebration for Saipan Team that joined the weekend race

as besides Carey, Lewie Tenorio also made it to the podium after winning the 40-49 age group. Tenorio timed in at 3:32:00 to finish second behind Lombard and third overall.

Tenorio was way ahead of 40-49 age group runner-up Rick Leone (3:46:09) and John Frias (3:55:21) and even beat

# Saipan Little League Opening Ceremony

PHOTOS By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND



CNMI District Administrator James Ada presents to Saipan Little League Baseball Inc. vice president Ray Yumul the league's newly approved charter during the opening ceremony last Feb. 25 at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios ballfield.



Father Ray Rosal recites the invocation.



Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos throws the first pitch in last Saturday's SLLBI 2012 opening ceremony held at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.



Some Little League players gather at home plat to recite the Little League Baseball pledge.



Kagman Elementary School's Umang Glee Club sings the national and CNMI anthems.




Members of the Kagman High School JROTC present the colors.




Teams stand at attention after parading onto the field.



The Kagman Little Legals march on to the field as the parade of teams commenced during the opening ceremony.




**Activity Schedule for February 28, 2012**




8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices  
 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices

There are no scheduled events.



There are no scheduled events.



**Bryant, West  
hold on to win  
NBA All-Star  
game**

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# Saipan Tribune Sports

**Mahan stops  
McIlroy in  
Match Play**

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Miyuki Matsumura, left, and Miki Oyama in action in the 2012 Marianas Cup Pro-Am Beach Volleyball Tournament held over the weekend at Fiesta Resort & Spa.



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Junki Hatabe, far right, and Daisuke Matsumoto in action in the semifinals of the 2012 Marianas Cup Pro-Am Beach Volleyball Tournament held over the weekend at Fiesta Resort & Spa sand courts.

## Daisuke, Junki win 4th straight Marianas Cup

### » Compatriots top women's field

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND  
walter\_sutherland@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Japanese beach volleyball pros Junki Hatabe and Daisuke Matsumoto clinched their fourth straight men's Marianas Cup Pro-Am Beach Volleyball Tournament championship over the weekend at the Fiesta Resort & Spa sand courts.

Hatabe and Matsumoto's win was the highlight of the 20th Annual Marianas Beach Volleyball Festival. The banner event also saw nine-year veteran and former champ Miyuki Matsumura and newcomer Miki Oyama, also of Japan, battle through the lower bracket to win the top prize in the women's division.

The overall field included 25 men's and 15 women's teams.



The Top 15 men's pairs advanced to Sunday's elimination rounds. The teams played pool play matches on Saturday to determine placings on Sunday's double-elimination bracket.

Hatabe and Matsumoto advanced to the finals undefeated

but stumbled against U.S. pro Ty Loomis and his amateur partner Matt Leszczynski in the men's first finals set, 21-14.

The Japanese duo, which had twice-to-beat advantage going into the finale, recovered just in time and took the deciding set, 15-11.

See **DAISUKE** on  
**Page 26**

## Mieko, Lewie win in Tour de Guahan

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Saipan pro Mieko Carey survived cramps and two tough riders to defend the women's division title in last Sunday's lung-busting 2012 Tour de Guahan.

Carey completed the 110-kilometer race in three hours, 29 minutes, and two seconds to set a new course record in the women's division and eclipse her own mark (3:30:27) last year when she won over Korean Ji Hyun Lee.

Lee returned this year and was joined by U.S. pro and Olympic hopeful Lenore Pipes, making the 2012 women's field more competitive. However, Carey did not back down to the challenge from the two strong riders, as she came out on top of the race again. Lee settled for another runner-up finish with her time of 3:32.12, while Pipes, who hails from Talofofo, Guam, but is now based in New York, rounded out the Top 3 after posting 3:35:42. Last year, Carey finished the race about 10 and 30 minutes ahead of Lee and third placer Michelle Peariso, respectively.

"It was a tougher race than last year as three ladies were riding together until the 80K point. I came back here as defending champion which made me more



Tenorio



Carey

nervous and pressured. Also it was my first race for this season so I was not sure how much I am in shape now and if I am ready to race or not," said Carey, who still finished second overall behind men's open division winner Peter Lombard (3:23:22).

Carey was in the lead group in women's the first 16K flat ride along with Lee, Pipes, and three male riders. Then next came the long hilly part that dominated the hard course.

"This was where the real race started. It was hilly until finish line. I did not try to push early,"

the Saipan pro said.

Midway through the race, several riders slowed down, while one female dropped out, making Mieko worried about the remaining uphill climb.

"I was nervous, I don't know how far I can keep up with them after climbing 30K," Carey said.

At the 80K mark on the way up to Umatac, Carey's legs began to cramp up.

"It was very painful. After Umatic, I was second overall. I could see the first rider, but my legs were badly hurt. I tried to stretch them but it made them worse. I took gel and told myself I had one more hour to race. I was in first place in the women's division at that time, but two strong female riders are chasing me. I could not take it easy. I kept telling myself I have to go and push harder. Then suddenly the cramps were gone. I was lucky," the back-to-back champion said.

Then in the last 10K of the race, Carey kept it going, as her support crew told her Lee was only two minutes behind.

"I know I was tired just like everyone, but that did not make me slow down. I was just up by two minutes and they [Lee and Pipes] still have a chance to catch up. Then a few steps away

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WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Paradise Island Animal Hospital Hustlers third baseman Manny Flores fires over to first base during their Big League matchup against IT&E Fielders last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

## Big Hustlers, Senior Lions eke out wins

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND  
walter\_sutherland@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



The Big League's Paradise Island Animal Hospital Hustlers and the Senior League's Marianas CableVision Kagman Lions each came out on top of their respective matches as the Saipan Little League Baseball 2012 season

continued at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

The Hustlers snuck past the IT&E Fielders, 3-2, in a nine-inning chess match, while the Lions outlasted the Saipan Shipping Company Jets, 6-5, after an extra frame.

Also on Saturday, the Junior League's Hawaiya Technologies Inc. Ol'Aces shut down the Bank of Saipan Red Sox,

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